C 71. a. 18

Hebdomada Sacra:

A WEEKES DEVOTION:

OR, SEVEN POETICALL MEDITATIONS, VPON THE SECOND Chapter of S^t. *Matthewes Gospell.*

Written, by ROGER COCKS.

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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE, IAMES, LORD *Strange.*

POetry (noble Lord) in theſe looſe times,
Wherin men rather loue, then loath their crimes,
If hand in hand with piety ſhe goe,
Though without bluſhing ſhe her face may ſhow)
finds but cold welcome, ſuch things onely take,
as flatter greatneſſe, or fond fancie make
baud to baſe delight: yet grauer eyes
To ſacred lines (though rudely drawne) deſpiſe,
and ſuch are yours: vpon this worke of mine
Vouchſafe to let them fall, or rather ſhine,
With kind acceptance doe but daine to grace it,
and enuie ſhall want power to deface it.

To the Reader.

READER my fortunes are so meanely friended,
I come into thy presence vncommended:
Nor would I haue thee for *Encomiums* looke,
Or frontispeece, farre better then the booke,
My veine is not so high, to be commended,
Nor yet so low, but it may be defended,
By one sole Patron: Some that carpe will gather,
This is no Poem, but a Sermon rather,
But let them know who thus seuerely note it,
No profest Poet, but a Preacher wrote it.

A VVEEKES DEVOTION.

Sundaies Meditation, or the first *Canto* for the first day.

The Argument.

Christs obscure Birth describ'd, the Place,
To which he did vouchsafe such Grace.
The Time when he was borne is nam'd:
The Iew for vnbeliefe is blam'd.

WHen *Cæsar* famous for his Gallian warre,
Had ended that vnnaturall ciuill jarre,
Twixt him and *Pompey*, and by his defeat,
Got him a greater name thē that of great,
Perpetuall Dictator, Enuie rose
To ioyne with coward Murder, and depose
Vertue from bearing rule, the Senate made
A bloudy shambles, and a couert shade.

For horrid treason, was the fatall place,
Where his blacke tragedie was wrought, in base
Vnmanly manner, falling by the hand,
Of an vnthankefull *Brutus*: the command,
Of Romes faire Empire then in three did lie,
Augustus, *Lepidus*, and *Anthonie*:
Lepidus soone gaue o're, whether in doubt,
Had he held still, he could not long hold out,
Or for some other reason, t'other twaine,
Shar'd equally Romes glorie, and the gaine
Of forraine kingdomes, till at length there past,
(For great mens freindship doth not alwaies last)
Vnkindnesse twixt them, *Anthonie* had wed
Augustus Sister, but forsooke her bed,
For Ægypts *Cleopatra*, This gaue fire
To new dissention, his vniust desire
Must be made good by Armes, for gentle words
Turne him to furie, our impartiall Swords
Shall soone decide this difference said he,
And soone they did indeed, fate did agree
Tô second his proud saying, for his forces,
Broke by *Augustus* powers, he life diuorces,
From her weake hold, and being thus o'recome,
Cæsar went backe triumphant vnto Rome.
Augustus now hauing sole rule, soone brought
His Prouinces in awe, all humblie sought
To haue his friendship, some few did rebell,
But with vndaunted courage he did quell
Their vaine attempts, and to his fames encrease,
Establisht through the world a welcome peace.
While *Ianus* Temple was shut vp and warre,
Chas'd backe to *Plutoes* kingdome, while no iarre
Kept out soule-ioyning concord, whose sweete art
Did Speares to Mattockes, Swords to Plowes conuert,

While

While *Noahs* Doue brought in her mouth (the Marke
Of generall peace) and Oliue Branch to th' Arke,
Christ the celestiall *Salomon* was borne,
That King of peace, whose *Amalthæan* horne,
Powr'd peace and plenty on vs; so they say,
That when the Eagle flies abroad to prey,
The pratling birds are silent, should not then
Warres tongue be silent, when the best of men
Like to a Royall Eagle from his nest,
Came from the Virgins wombe in manhood drest.
When Halcyons build their nest, & breed their yong,
The Seas are quiet, the winde findes no tongue,
'Twas fit the world should haue the like behauiour,
When the pure Virgin did bring forth our Sauiour.
Philosophers obserue the dewes descent,
Is in a cleare night, when the winde is pent *Aristotle.*
In Æols prison: and the Prophet told
Christ should come downe like dew, and such, behold,
Was his sweet entrance, neuer was the earth
So much refresht by dew, as by his birth,
Fit was it then for warres loud noise to cease,
That this dew might come in a calme of peace.
If in two Kingdomes, suppose *Spaine* and *France*,
Which long in hostile manner did aduance.
Armes against armes, one Kings eldest sonne
Marries the others daughter, warres are done,
And they which earst contended eagerly,
Now meet in loue, and feast in royalty,
So stood the case with vs, by faire pretence,
Malicious Satan made man to commence
A warre with God, a warre that would haue wrought
His endlesse ruine, had not mercie sought
A meanes to settle peace, the onely son
Of the Almightie, when he did put on

That

That veile of flesh, did by it fast combine
Our humane nature to his owne diuine,
And made a reconcilement, which no power
Can breake or time weare out, though euery houre
Satan attempt new practises, and Hell
Spit out her rankest venome, to expell
Man from his Makers fauour, but her spite
Falls on her head redoubled, while delight
Crownes our desires, such happy vnion gan
The blest Messias make 'twixt God and man.

Luke 2. No sooner had *Augustus* brought each land
Into subiection, but by his command
A generall Taxe was laid on euery nation,
Iudea 'mongst the rest, by Proclamation,
Each person to his natiue city went
There to be taxed: O that men were bent
With ready minde, and prompt alacrity,
To yeeld obedience vnto Gods decree,
As well as *Cæsars*, in the ranke of those
Who with submisse dutie did dispose
Their wills to this edict, a blessed paire:
Ioseph the iust, *Mary* the chast and faire,
Both *Abrahams* issue, both of *Dauids* stemme,
Came vnto *Dauids* City, *Bethlehem*,
There to be taxed, as the Law requir'd,
She being neere her time, which soone expir'd,
While they were there the dayes accomplished,
That the pure Virgin should be brought to bed,
And yet that phrase ist but improper heere,
Because the Inne, though full of guests, yet cleare,
Of Grace and goodnesse, would afford no roome,
Where she might child her issue, her ripe wombe,
Found, saue a stable, no conuenient place,
To rest it selfe, hard hearts whom such a case,

Mou'd

Mou'd to no pitty, heere she forth did bring
The Worlds Redeemer, heauens eternall King.
A King, where were the nobles of his Court?
Where all his followers? Where the full resort
Of honourable Matrons? to attend
Vpon his mother, was there neere a Friend
To giue soft musique? by whose gentle touch
Her sorrowes might be swagde, did all hearts grutch
To lend assistance? at a Princes birth
The voice of ioy speakes high, and from the earth,
Vnnumbred fires to such perfection grow,
As they would make another heauen below,
Heere all was husht and silent, to his owne
Christ came vnentertaind, because vnknowne.
But why, O Lord, wert thou thus poorely borne?
Why didst thou make thy selfe to be a scorne
To after Ages? Was it to conceale
Thy Deity from Satan? or reueale
Thy vnexampled goodnesse vnto man?
The like whereof, since time and place began
To circumscribe our actions, was not knowne,
Nor shall vnto succeeding age be showne.
As Israels King did once his habite change, 1. King. 22.
When he wagde warre 'gainst Syria and did range
The field in strange disguise: So Christ our King
Whom an vnbounded loue from heauen did bring,
To fight gainst hellish Syrians, and by armes
To giue vs freedome from death-threatning harmes,
Exchang'd his habite for bright Maiestie,
Clothing himselfe with base infirmity:
If some great King put on his royall Crowne,
And regall ornaments, he may be knowne,
But if his Kingly dignity he hide
In vile aray, he may passe vndiscried.

So

So had our kingly Sauiour cloth'd with light
As with a garment, come at firſt in ſight,
He would haue then beene knowne vnto his foe,
And none haue dar'd once to exchange a blow
That he might therefore come vnto the fight
Vnknowne, this King of Iſrael had him dight
In ſtrange aray: A Stable was his Throne,
A Cratch his Cradle, His attendance none,
With hunger, thirſt, diſgrace, and pouerty,
Our Sauiour couered his diuinity.

Loe here full low he in a Cratch doth lie,
Who ſometimes on the winged wind doth flie,
Iſai. 66. 1. And he whoſe throne is heau'n, whoſe footſtoole earth
Hath but a ſordid Stable at his Birth:
O had not man layne miſerably defil'd
In ſinnes polluted Stable, this faire Child
Had found a better lodging, but 'twas fit
That he which is our food, the ſweeteſt bit
That euer mortall taſted, ſhould be laid
In a poore Manger, ſince it may be ſaid,
Bernard. Men were turn'd worſe then beaſts, and therefore they
To be refreſht as beaſts that feede on Hay.

The ancient Prophets had foretold of yore
That Bethlehem was the place whereas ybore,
Should the *Meſſias* been: the learned read
The word to ſignifie the houſe of bread:
Whether becauſe for fruitefulneſſe and food,
It as a ſtore-houſe to the countrey ſtood,
Horreum Italiæ. Tully. So 'mongſt the ancient Romans Sicily
Was ſometimes called the barne of Italy:
Or becauſe Chriſt true heauenly bread indeed,
Whereon our ſoules, and not our mouthes doe feed,
Hieron. Gregory. Was there brought forth, ſo fathers moralize,
Indeed from him all bread that doth ſuffice

Our

Our ſoules and bodies is deriu'd: he giues
Corporall bread, by which the body liues:
Doctrinall bread he alſo doth affoord,
And this we call his holy heauenly Word,
Bread Sacramentall, in which we receiue
Spiritually the Giuer, and conceiue
A bleſſed vnion made in a ſtrange faſhion,
By Faith, and not by tranſubſtantiation:
In fine, celeſtiall bread he doth diſpoſe
At his eternall Table, vnto thoſe
Which are his Seruants whoſe delicious taſting
Shall giue our bodies an immortall laſting.
In *Ioſephs* time the corne of Ægypt land, Geneſ. 41.
Was without number, like the Ocean ſand,
Bethlem had greater plenty at Chriſts Birth,
For heere was bread to nouriſh all the earth,
And of more bleſt continuance: thoſe full eares
In *Pharaohs* countrey laſted but ſeuen yeares,
Leane famine then tooke place: our Bethlehems ſtore
(As inexhauſted) laſts for euermore:
There the Ægyptians when they wanted Cates,
Were faine to buy them at exceſſiue rates.
Heere Bread like to the Prophets Milke and Wine, Eſai. 55. 1.
A man may purchaſe without price or coyne:
And therefore as all nations in their neede,
To *Ioſeph* came for corne, whereon to feede:
So let all people vnto Bethlehem haſte,
And ſeeke out the true *Ioſeph* which is plac'd
By the celeſtiall *Pharaoh* o're the earth,
To furniſh men with corne, againſt the dearth
Threatning the ſoules deſtruction, who will giue
If they but aske, enough for them to liue
Heere, and heereafter, where they ſhall be fed,
In an eternall houſe of liuing bread.

Thrice

Thrice happy Bethlehem, thou blest house of bread
On whom the Sunne of glorie first did spread:
The comfortable beames of his man God
Vnited nature, and there made abode:
But O more happy they, within whose heart
Faith giues him second birth, and will not part
With this blest store, I would our soules might be
The Bethlehem of his Natiuity:
But ere this can be so, we must put on
Mystically such a condition,
As that place had: first Bethlehem did seeme
But little in extent, lesse in esteeme,
The least of Iudahs thousands: So must we,
Micah.5.2. If we expect a blest renascency
Of Christ within our soules, or would inherit
The purchase of his all-sufficient merit.
Be meane, and little in our owne esteeme,
How great, how good soeuer we may seeme:
In others iudgement: euery Christian knowes
That Christ a Lilly is, but such as growes
Cant.2.1. In the low valley of an humble minde,
Not on proud mountaine tops, and as we finde
Flouds run not vp steep cliffs, but through low grounds
Conueigh their current: So his Grace surrounds
With a sweet streame of goodnesse, only those,
Which like low bottomes humbly doe dispose
Themselues to that blest moisture, we must then
If we would haue our Christ the best of men
Spiritually borne in vs, all agree
To be a Bethlehem in humility.
Againe we must be storehouses of bread,
To feed the hungry, he that doth not spread
A wing of mercy on the poore shall finde,
Christ will not house them there, the supple minde

Like

Like pliant waxe, loues gentle fire muſt ſoften
Ere he imprint his ſeale, and we muſt often
Caſt our bread on the waters, if we looke Eccles. 11. 1.
That he which humane nature on him tooke,
To ſaue the world, while here we liue on earth,
Should haue within our hearts a ſecond birth.
Now was the Scepter tane from *Iudahs* hand,
Nor 'twixt his feete ſate he, who did command
The Lawes coerciue power: an argument
The promis'd *Shilo* was already ſent Gen. 49. 10.
Blind Iew, which dazeled with abundant light,
Sit'ſt like a dull Ægyptian, in the night
Of ſoule-deluding error, could record
Of ancient Prophets, make thee giue thy Lord
No better welcome, wilt thou yet denie
This firme vnqueſtion'd truth obſtinate eye
Shut vp in wilfull blindneſſe, let the place
Where Chriſt was borne, the time when, from ỹ chaſe
This cloud of darkeneſſe, looke not ſtill in vaine
For thy Meſſias, who till all againe
Turne into *Chaos*, ſhall no more be ſent
What time for want of faith thou ſhalt be ſhent
And ſentenc'd to deſtruction, if in time,
Thy teares like Iordan waſh not out thy crime.
But as when *Moſes* was in Ægypt borne, Exod. 2.
He was of his owne mother as forlorne
Caſt out into the riuer, and there found
By *Pharaohs* daughter, who from being dround
Preſeru'd the Infant, and with tender care
Brought vp this foundling, as her wombe had bare,
That goodly Hebrew: So was Chriſt bereau'd
Of a glad welcome by the Iewes, receiu'd
By the now happier Gentiles, happier farre
Then *Abrahams* iſſue, whom ſo bright a Starre

Cannot

Cannot enlighten, but his word deſpiſe,
And 'gainſt the Sun of glory ſhut their eyes.

Mondaies Meditation, or the ſecond *Canto.*

The Argument.

The Magi come out of the Eaſt,
Vnto Ieruſalem, in queſt
Of the Meſſias, and enquire,
But meet not there their full deſire.

Iugd. 6. BEhold while *Gideons* fleece, the luyce is dry,
His floore (the Gentiles) doth it ſelfe apply
To drinke the heauenly dew: From Hebers land
A countrey farre in the eaſt parts did ſtand,
But in what place vncertaine, whether Perſia,
Neerer Chaldea, or the fartheſt India,
Primitiæ Gentium. *Auguſtin.* (Each haue their ſeuerall authors) did ſend forth
Theſe firſt fruits of the Gentile (whoſe high worth
Makes them thought kings by ſome) I dare not ſay
Only from thence they came, from whence the day
Breakes, and *Aurora* chaſes thence blacke night,
Where *Sol* firſt riſing ſhewes his glorious light,
And guilds the lofty mountaines, whence his beames
Reflect a brightneſſe on the eaſterne ſtreames.
Whether theſe wiſe men came from *Abrahams* line,
Yet not of *Sarahs* off-ſpring, ſome aſſigne
Keturah their grand-mother, or begot
By *Baalams* ſucceſſor, or tis not

Mar

Materiall to examine, ſo to lay
For firme poſition, were to much to ſay:
Whether they were Magicians as ſome thinke,
And ſuch who for deepe ſcience choſe to linke
Their Soules to Satan, or Philoſophers
Morall and naturall, or Aſtronomers,
(To which opinion I aſſent thus farre,
Becauſe we finde God call'd them by a ſtarre
I liſt not to examine may't ſuffice,
They haue this only title they were wiſe.
Wiſe men indeed, it is true wiſedomes lore,
To ſeeke for Chriſt, and neuer to giue ore
Till we haue found him, ſo did theſe that came
Out from the Eaſt, would we could doe the ſame.
It is a rare thing to be skil'd in arts
Abſtruſeſt cunning, and to haue all parts
That better humane knowledge, but to know
Chriſt, is more worth, then all that art can ſhow:
And therefore as when *Phœbus* 'gins to riſe,
The ſtarres ecclipſed luſtre hidden lies
From eye of mortall; So when as diuine
Soule-quickning wiſedome, as the Sun doth ſhine,
Each humane ſcience like a petty ſtarre,
Muſt vaile vnto it: as a ſhip from farre
Spying the Kings tide on the narrow ſeas,
When ſhe comes neere (though little for her eaſe)
Bends her proud head, and doth without faile,
In moſt ſubmiſſiue manner ſtrike her Saile.
See here the (ne're enough to be admir'd)
Attractiue power of Chriſt, by which enſpir'd
To finde their Sauiour out, with ioyfull hearts
Theſe Magi come from the remoteſt parts:
The Sun doth not exhale more forcibly
The puteſt vapours vp, the Loadſtone nigh

The Sympathetique ſteele, makes it not cling,
More cloſe vnto it, then this heauenly King,
(His innate vertue did ſuch loue diſtill)
Made their affections cleaue vnto his will.
2. King. 10. That Sheba's Queene drawne by the bare report
Of *Salomons* faire vertue, left her Court,
For *Iudah's* countrey may full ſtrange appeare,
But ſee then *Salomon* a greater heere.
Luke 11. 31. More ſtrange to Chriſt the comming of thoſe wiſe,
Then hers to *Salomon* we muſt agnize:
She was but one alone, they many were,
She but a woman, they men, ſhe came there
Led by the tongue of Fame, but they from farre
Were guided by the leading of a ſtarre:
She came to one whoſe riper yeeres did ſpeake
Him growne to mans eſtate; they to a weake
And tender Infant: She to one that ſwaid
A royall Scepter; They to one was laid
In a poore Manger; She came but to trie
The truth of Fame, and curiouſly to ſpie
His ſtate and knowledge, in effect meere vanity:
They to adore their God in his humanity:
In fine we finde her comming is expreſt
From forth the South: but theirs is from the eaſt.
Like as the Sun when he doth firſt diſplay
His radiant luſtre, and with lightſome day
Breake from the Eaſt, and getting in his throne
Fixt in the middle of the heauenly Zone,
Makes his diurnall progreſſe to the Weſt,
And then returnes againe into the Eaſt:
So thoſe wiſe men doe firſt their iourney gin,
From out the Eaſt nor did they euer lin,
Till to Ieruſalem the Weſt they came,
And fitly may this occidentall name

Be giuen to it, since the glorious Sun
Of righteousnesse hauing his course runne,
Did there sit red and bloudy, there he died,
Who for the sinne of man was crucified,
From thence they Eastward passe, and neuer cease
Till to their countrey they come backe in peace.
Of all the parts in the worlds continent
The East hath aye beene held most excellent.
Whether because that fruitfull Paradice,
Was planted Eastward, or that Sol doth rise
There in his glory, or that the day spring
Is made an attribute to heauens great King: Luke 1.78.
Hence is it that in Churches (when addrest
In Prayer to God) we looke vnto the East.
Either because the earths most honoured part *Iustin Martyr.*
To the Almighties worship we conuert:
Or because Paradice, which Eastward stood,
Lost first by Adam's fall, and since made good *Greg. Nysse.*
By Christ our Sauiour, we by looke desire:
Or cause the Lambe of God, which did expire
Vpon the Crosse, extended to the West, *Damascen.*
We to behold him looke into the East;
For many causes which might be assign'd,
This quarter of the World, the East, we find
In high repute, of which the least in worth
Is not, that such wise men it did bring forth.
Well doth the title with the place accord,
Wise from the East, for easterne parts afford
Best intellectuals: so when holy writ
Would *Salomon* commend for rarest wit, 1. King. 4. 30.
This Elogie it giues, he did exceede
The best of those, which the East parts did breede:
As if the men which did inhabite there,
Then all the rest of mortals wiser were,

Which commonly is ſo, either becauſe
Of *Phœbus* neere vicinity, which drawes
Groſſe vapours thence, and by his quickning ray,
Refines the fluent bloud, whoſe pure allay
Giues vigour to the Spirits: So we ſee
That Plants by Gardners carefull induſtry
Set, that the morning Sun may on them glow,
Doe ſooneſt ripe, and to perfection grow:
So natures well red ſecretaries ſay,
That in the morne of all times, of the day,
The faireſt Pearles are generate, and moſt bright
Then ſhines the gold Excelling *Chryſolite*.
Or happely in wiſedome they excell,
Cauſe our firſt Parents in the Eaſt did dwell,
And might to their Succeſſors, more confin'd
Some monuments of knowledge leaue behind,
How fitly come they from the Eaſt, t'expreſſe
The riſing of the Sun of righteouſneſſe:
Bernard. And with the glad report of this bright morrow
To chaſe from humane hearts the night of ſorrow,
From thence they come, frō whence the day is borne,
And *Phœbus* hides the bluſhes of the morne,
Chryſoſt. That from the place where the day gins to cleare,
Faith the ſoules day-light alſo might appeare
Where after Adam was creare of earth,
Gan humane bodies firſt to haue their birth,
After our bleſſed Sauiours Incarnation,
The ſoule did firſt receiue Regeneration,
Where ſinne and nature firſt beginning had,
There Grace and truth ariſe, where miſchiefe clad
In mercies habite, did firſt ruine man
His bleſſed reparation there began
Indeede 'twas fit that part which did begin
To poiſon humane nature with foule ſin,

Shou

Should ſend forth thoſe that did in Grace excell,
And of a generall Antidote foretell.
Within the heart of Iudahs fertile land,
Salem the ſoiles Metropolis did ſtand,
Builded by *Shem*, the Magi to this place,
Arriue, in hope to ſee their Sauiours face:
And where indeed on humane ſtate to ground,
Was the Meſſias likelier to be found,
To ſee the King where could they haue opinion,
If not in the chiefe ſeate of his Dominion:
To finde the heart, they that body the enter,
Seeke out the midſt, becauſe there lies the Center.
Chriſt was our head, and where could men expect
Him, but in *Shem's* faire Citty, which erect
Aboue the reſt in Iudah, did ſo ſtand
As doth the head the body to command *Ioſephus.*
Ieruſalem the viſion of peace
Imports, as Learned ſay, ſterne warre did ceaſe,
When Chriſt was borne, where thē could make abode
Better then in Ieruſalem the God
Of Peace and Mercie? Was not there the Court?
Why ſhould the King be abſent? the reſort
Of Prieſts was thither; there the Altar ſtood,
Why ſhould not Chriſt the Sacrifice, whoſe bloud
Did expiate our ſinnes, be alſo there?
There was the Temple, whoſe faire frame vpreare
Did *Salomon* the wiſe, but ſince deſpoyld
Herod in greater beauty did rebuild:
Why ſhould not then the Temples God abide
In ſuch a place, ſo highly beautified?
To queſtion this no more, 'twas Gods beheſt,
Nor are the greateſt places ſtill the beſt:
Experience tells vs, Chriſt is ſometimes found
In a poore ſmoakie cottage, when the ground

Of goodly Palaces, pau'd with faireſt ſtone,
And Roomes of choiſeſt beauty ſtand alone
Vnuiſited by him; he may receiue
Birth in a petty cottage, while him reaue
Of life a city doth: So was it here,
As plaine in ſacred Story doth appeare:
Bethlehem at firſt into the world him ſent,
Ieruſalem out of the world him hent,
I'th firſt of theſe a cradle he did finde,
But in the laſt a Graue was him aſſign'd,
Borne, though obſcurely borne, at Bethlehem,
And crucified at Ieruſalem:
The wiſe men then at Salem may enquire,
But ſhall not there find out their Soules deſire.

But why, O Lord, ſince there thou waſt not then,
Didſt thou permit thoſe well deuoted men
To wander from their way, and goe about,
Protracting time in ſeeking of thee out:
Did their owne error leade them from the way?
And thou in iuſtice ſuffer them to ſtray?
Bernard. Subtracting from them thy ſtarres glorious light,
Becauſe they truſted more to humane might,
Then thy aſſiſting power: into my thought
It cannot ſinke, that ignorance then brought
But their all carefull prouidence, whoſe hand
Makes all our actions waite on thy command:
Perhaps it was thy will theſe men ſhould come
Firſt, to Ieruſalem, leſt they ſhould rome
Vncertainely about, for their records
Of ancient Prophets, kept, could ſhew the Lords
Moſt certaine place of birth and as one ſaith
Informe their knowledge and confirme their Faith:
Chryſoſt. Or it may be as Legates thou didſt ſend
Theſe Magi vnto Salem, to the end

The

The Iewes might their Messias Birth discerne,
And these teach others, while they seeke to learne,
Or was it not to stirre vp *Isaacs* Line,
To seeke their Sauiour out, when thus combine
They saw the Gentiles: or as some conclude *Chrysost.*
To argue them of foule ingratitude,
Who would not their Messias entertaine *Augustine.*
Whom they saw strangers seeke with so much paine?
O let not vs like these hard-hearted Iewes
Out of a wilfull blindnesse thus refuse
Grace freely offred, let these wiser men
Leade vs by their example, how and when
To seeke out Christ, but yet take heed their fashion
Be not abus'd by apish imitation:
As 'tis by Iesuited Rome, which drawes
From hence her pilgrimage to Saints, because
The Magi come to Salem, who indeed
Their action giues no countenance, nor our Creed
Warrant to this deuice, for but compare
The Romanists with them, and they will share
No correspondencie at all, vnlesse
A kinde of poore resemblance they expresse,
In their long iourneys, and their larger gifts,
They offer at their shrines, impotent shifts
For their grosse Idoll worship; first we know
The wise men taught by God to Salem goe,
He blest that iourney which they had begun,
And sent a Starre to leade them to a Sun:
These haue no starre at all, the heauenly Word,
That light vnto our feet, doth them afford
No helpe in all their iourney, ne haue they
The starre of Faith to guide them in the way:
Blind zeale may hale them forward, or perchance
Humane tradition may it selfe aduance

But as a wandring Plannet, no true guide,
Or elſe the like doth vnto them betide,
Which doth to thoſe, who iourneying in the night
Eſpie an *Ignis fatuus*, whoſe falſe light
Leads them ore ditch and hedge, though dirt & mire,
His maine inuention is iuſt ſuch a fire,
Deluding thoſe that follow it, let me ſay
Romes Pilgrimes are thus guided in their way:
Mat.2.2. Againe the Magi ſeeke for Chriſt alone,
Where's *Iudahs* King? O ſhew vs him or none?
Whereas the Romiſh Pilgrimes Chriſt forſake,
And for their Sauiour vnto Saints them take:
The wiſe men came Chriſt liuing to behold;
Theſe but dead rotten reliques to vnfold:
They came to worſhip God; theſe idle drones
Come but to worſhip ſenceleſſe ſtocks and ſtones:
Shall we then ſay, theſe imitate the wiſe?
Alas, I cannot, no we muſt deuiſe
To follow them a better way then this,
Or finde we ſhall not, cauſe we ſeeke amiſſe:
And would ye know, wherein to imitate
Theſe bleſſed Magi? Let it be in that
Which is praiſe-worthy, as their care and paine,
To finde out Chriſt, for as the learned ſaine,
They tooke their iourney when the colder ayre,
Chang'd dewes to froſts, when winters ſiluer haire
Stucke full of Snow, and *Boreas* bitter breath
Blew numbneſſe on their limbs: yet did pale death
Numb.22. Stand, as the Angell ſtood in *Balaams* way
With a drawne Sword, their bodies he might ſtay,
Not their affections, they went forward ſtill,
Chooſing to die, rather then want their will,
Like them, ſo vs no rub, no barre ſhould hold
From *Iudahs* King: As couetous for gold,

Am-

ambitious after honour: So must we
eeke Christ, with feruour and alacrity:
eligion is not bred in sloth and ease,
he sweat of labour, ere she God can please,
ust sit vpon her brow: yet see we are
appy in this, we need not iourney farre
o finde Christ out, our lot so faire doth stand,
hat we may still keepe in our native land,
nd meet our wishes, Christ is to be found
ithin our Kingdome, in the hallowed ground,
hereon our Temples stand, each Sacrament,
ay euery good soule is his continent:
et we to finde him out (so meane our care)
lore slow then *Snailes*, more lame then Cripples are:
how shall the great care and diligence
f those, condemne our sloth and negligence?
ow should we feare, since in offence we stand
quall with *Iudah*, Gods all-powerfull hand
hould throw downe vengeance on vs, and our eyes
eest that faire light which now they doe despise.
he countrey of these Magi was the East,
nd commonly men loue their owne soile best,
et ready prest they in obedience stand,
o leaue (as *Abraham* did) their native land:
hen that blest Maid and Mother lost her sonne,
t her returne from Salem, as vndone
ithout him (who can haue so great a losse
nd not goe home againe by weeping crosse?)
he sought him sorrowing 'mongst her friends & kin, Luke 2.
ut could not finde him, she might there begin
er search anew, Christ is not alwayes found
Mongst kindred and acquaintance, if the ground
hat gaue vs birth, will not our Lord receiue,
or him we must our native countrey leaue,

Our

Our Friends, our home, and ſtranger places greet,
Though our owne *Ithaca* be nere ſo ſweet.
Thrice happy is that man, which can with theſe
Forſake his ſoile, banniſh neglect and eaſe,
Goe from the Eaſt of pleaſure, till he finde
Ieruſalem, that is, the peace of minde.
Now had the Magi found this City out,
Where Sion ſtood, and walking round about,
(Not to ſuruay the building or behold
The ſtately Temple, richly deckt with gold)
Enquire for *Iudahs* King, her new borne King,
This ſeem'd to *Iſaacs* Line an vncouth thing,
They knew the Scepter was from *Iudah* gone,
And *Herod* who was now their King, was one
Inaugur'd by the Romanes, therefore they
Pos'd by this queſtion, knew not what to ſay:
But the wiſe men the more they found them ſlow,
To anſwer, were the more inflam'd to know:
Tell vs we pray (for we deſire to learne)
Where liues this Infant King? we can diſcerne
No ſigne of ioy, to make vs thinke him heere:
O then where is he? we account not deare
Our trauell or expence, ſo we may gaine
The long-wiſht ſight of *Iudahs* Soueraigne:
That he is borne, we doe true tidings bring,
Borne yours, your promis'd, your expected King,
Borne in your Countrey, what we ſpeake we know,
What we haue ſeene we willingly will ſhow,
We haue his ſtarre ſeene, whole vnuſuall light,
Shone in our eaſterne climate, and made night
Excell the day in beauty: There's no cauſe
You ſhould ſuſpect we come to breake your Lawes,
Or to inuade your Kingdome, for we bring
No armed troupes to ſet vpon your King,

We

VVe doe not come as ſpies, to vnderſtand
The fruitfulneſſe and ſtrength of this your land,
Our trauell is not to encreaſe our wealth,
By traffique with you, or by priuate ſtealth
To get your treaſure, ſee, we bring great ſtore
Of coſtly ſpices, and rich Indian Ore,
Vnto this royall Infant to preſent,
Which with ſubmiſſiue reuerence our intent
Is to lay downe before him, and fall low
Our ſelues before his footeſtoole, for we know
That more then man is in him, and are come
Thus farre to worſhip him: This is the ſumme
Of all our wiſhes, let but your report
Be our direction, to this Princes Court:
This ſaid they ceaſt, but none can them reſolue
In their demand, which doth their ſoules inuolue
VVith a new cloud of ſorrow, in which plight
A while I leaue them, till a clearer light
Infuſe more knowledge, time ere long will bring
The deuout Magi, to this new borne King.

Tueſdaies

Tueſdaies Meditation, or the third *Canto*.

The Argument.

Herod and his the Newes appalls,
The King in haſte a counſell calls:
Next to conferre in ſecret wiſe,
He with the Magi doth deuiſe.

BY this time fame hauing new impt her wings,
Flies from the City to the Court, and brings
Newes of theſe mens arriuall, and the end
Of their intended iourney: to commend
Their diligence Court-Paraſites will ſtriue,
2. Sam. 18. Like *Ahimaaz* and *Cuſhi*, who ſhall thriue
Beſt in their expedition: Princes eares
Doe like their hands reach farre, and tyrants feares
Place Spies in euery corner, whoſe cloſe art
Sliely inſinuates into the Heart,
Of the abuſed Subiect, and from thence
Drawes danger on his head, vnder pretence
Of more then common kindeneſſe, what he finds
Sincerely ſpoken from plaine meaning minds,
He poyſons in report, when he it beares
To his Kings greedy, all-ſuſpecting eares.
After this tatling goddeſſe once had ſpread
This Newes abroad, and buz'd into the head
Of fawning Sycophants, a pick-thanke tale,
Looke how a ſhip driuen with a fore-right gale

Cut

Cuts through the Ocean: they hie fast to court,
And to sterne *Herod* make a loud report.
No sooner had fame toucht the tyrants eare,
But that his coward bloud gaue way to feare,
To take possession of him, that he stood
Astonisht at the newes: the raging floud
When the fierce winds impetuously doe blow,
And in their vnresisted fury throw
The angry billowes, 'gainst the sandy shore
Spits not out some, or doth more loudly roare,
Then vexed *Herod*, who did inly burne,
When ycie feare to fiery rage did turne.
Like as a siluer Current, whose cleare streame
When sweetly guilded by the lightsome beame
Of gold-lockt *Phœbus*, it reflects a light,
Becomes a pleasant obiect to the sight,
But if some ruder Swaine disturbe the floud
By raking in it, fetching dirt and mud
The water thickens, and begins to looke
More like a foule sinke, then a christall brooke:
So while the riuer of man's life runs cleare,
And Sun-like reason, from his lofty sphearе
Guilds it with beauty, 'tis a precious thing,
Surpassing Thames and Isis, or that spring
Which fond *Narcissus* in his iourney found,
In which the selfe-admiring Boy was drown'd,
But if that passion easie passage finde,
It soone disturbs the quiet of the minde,
Then the Conceit growes muddy to the brinke,
Like puddle, bad to view, but worse to drinke.
So stood the case with *Herod*, and indeed
Suspicious Tirants seldome better speed:
A *panicke* terrour takes them oftentimes,
When none seeke to offend them, but their crimes:

And,

And reason good, for this truth hath beene said,
Seneca. He whom all feare, of all must be afraid:
O heauy burthen of a Monarches crowne,
O Pillow stufe with thornes, and not with dowlne,
O glorious bondage seldome blest with age,
O lofty building subiect to the rage
Of storme and tempest, O faire guilded Cup
Containing poison, who would take thee vp,
(So once a Macedonian king did say,)
Antigonus Though he should stumble on thee in the way.
As a faire roome at some great nuptiall feast
Hung with rich *Arras*, and each corner dreſt
With costly furniture, heere goodly plate,
There curious glasses, all set out in state,
Tables well wrought, with perfum'd damaske couer'd,
Embroder'd stooles, nothing amisse or slubber'd,
By some rude fray of the distemper'd guest
Or Met. (As with the *Centaures* at the *Lapythes* Feast)
Becomes disordered, so that all the frame
Nought but a *Chaos* you can iustly name:
Such a confused heape was *Iudah's* King,
When fame humming about his eares, did sting
His very heart and soule, with the report
Of a new riuall, to his Crowne and Court.
Now gan remembrance of his Tyrant raigne
To torture him with an vnwonted paine,
The stormie rage which on his subiects fell
He thinkes they will reuenge, and now rebell,
Dismaid at this, he doth begin to moane him,
As if they came already to dethrone him:
Feare is an ill Interpreter of things,
Especially within the hearts of kings:
He thinkes that strangers will inuade his land
In hostile manner, and with powe'rfull hand,

Expell

Expell him thence, and in his ſeate aduance
The new borne Infant: then he ſees a glance
Of a great Perſian Hoſte, that hard at hand,
Haue got already at their full command
The bulwarke of his kingdome, Salems towne,
Or elſe the Magi durſt not vp and downe
Make ſuch enquiry, quite againſt his will,
Who with a very frowne was wont to kill:
Mou'd with the wind of different thoughts he raues,
Like the barke, beaten by the furious waues
Of the enchafed floud: the Deuill too
Exagitates his minde, yet doubtfull who
The new-borne Infant was: he knew decreed
A time in fate, wherein the womans ſeed Gen.3.15.
Should break the Serpents head: As when the queene
Of heauen, fiercely enrag'd with iealous ſpleene
Againſt *Alcmena*, and her Ioue-borne ſonne
From Affricke brought two *Snakes* to ſeaze vpon
His infant body, that their gripe ſo fierce
Might cauſe his cradle to become his Herſe,
But young *Alcides* made his tender hands
About the Serpents ſuch death-threatning bands,
They could not hurt him, ſqueeſing them ſo ſore,
That 'twixt his fingers a foule purple gore
Iſſued apace, in which their life was drown'd,
Then let them drop quite ſenceleſſe to the ground:
So ſtood the caſe, when as diſſention roſe
Betwixt this royall Infant and his foes:
Herod and *Satan* two foule Serpens were,
Whom this new *Hercules* did ſqueeſe with feare
Of his all-powerfull hand, they both did dread
Their kingdomes ruine, and by this were led
Into vnwonted troubles, *Satan* thought
That this was he, by whom was to be wrought

(As

(As a new *Moſes*) Iſraels Redemption
From Hels proud *Pharaoh*, and a full exemption
From all Ægyptian bondage, which oppreſſion
Lay heauie vpon man for his tranſgreſſion:
This troubled Satan in infernall ſhade,
And with new horrour did his thoughts inuade:
Like as the greedy wolfe, when as he ſpies
The carefull Shepheard neere, or heares the cries
Of the fierce Maſtife troubled therewithall,
A chilling feare his ſences doth apall:
So woluiſh Satan when he ſaw ſo neere,
The Shepheard of our ſoule, a deadly feare
Tooke hold vpon him, and diſturb'd him ſo,
As doth the preſence of a powerfull Foe
A weake opponent: rob'd of his content,
He vexes *Herod* his fit inſtrument,
Knowing that feare of ſuch a danger will
Stirre vp a care, how to preuent his ill,
Regardleſſe ſo he may ſecurely raigne
Though deepe in blood he doe his hand ingraine,
VVell hoping this diſtraction would him bring
To ſeeke the ruine of the new borne King.
That ſuch a Tyrant ſhould ſo farre giue way
To his perplexed thoughts, and ſo diſmay
With feare of future troubles his weake minde,
Is not to be admir'd: But when I finde
That all Ieruſalém was rent in ſunder
With him in this ſtrange Paſſion, then I wonder
She, that as one or'eioy'd at this new birth
Should haue expreſt a triumph and with mirth
Haue crowned her browes, ſhe that doth repreſent
A peacefull city, and with full content
Should the great King of peace haue entertain'd,
Was at Chriſts birth, as in her trauell, paind.

But

But wonder not, a Princes faſhion
Is ſoone obſeru'd by Subiects imitation:
Cameleons cannot into colours turne
Faſter then Courtiers: if their ſoueraigne mourne
Blacke clouds of ſorrow couer all their face,
If ſmile, they change their copie; 'tis a grace:
Clyſophus thinkes to be without an eye,
If *Philip* be but blind: to goe awry
If *Alexander* doe ſo: Paraſites
Are iuſt like glaſſes to their Princes ſights,
Fitly reſembling euery looke they haue,
Merry or ſad, ridiculous or graue:
And as the Eccho anſwereth the voice *Iuuenal. Satyr. 3.*
In the ſame tone it ſpeakes, if it reioyce
Sending forth ioyfull accents, if it ſorrow
Vtter, as ſad a language it doth borrow.
So *Herods* Courtiers Eccho-like, but ſound
What they receiue from him by a rebound:
Thus with him theſe (true royalties worſt bane)
Sea-like, or like the moone doe waxe and wane.
Another ſort of Courtiers, *Herods* friends
Did ſympathize with him, but in their ends
Much differing from the former, ſome did doubt
A new commenced warre, others more ſtout,
Expected alteration, for the Theame
It is beſt fiſhing in the troubled ſtreame,
Did whet deſire, onely they did not know
Which part to ſide on, when the ſtorme ſhould grow
And this perplext them: A third ſort there were
Of grauer Citizens; much diſmaid with feare,
That *Herod* vexed at this ſtrange report
Would wreake his ſpleene on them: or if the court
Should change her King, they fear'd a heauier yoake,
For ſeldome comes the better when the ſtroake

Falls from a farre-fetcht hand, it heauier lights
To haue an vnknowne Prince it euen affrights
Their vnderſtanding: As that vlcerous man,
Stucke full of flies, when ſome in pitty 'gan
To chace them thence, cryed out in piteous wiſe,
O doe not wrong me ſo, theſe full fed flies
Now ſated with my bloud, I well can beare,
But if you driue them thence, I much doe feare
New ones will fill their places, and the eaſe
You thinke to doe me, me farre more diſpleaſe:
So theſe thought better, with the ruſticke ſwaine
Once to digge vp *Antigonus* againe,
And to endure thoſe flies that had their fill,
Rather then new ones, which more bloud might ſwill.
The common ſort ſeeing their ſoueraigne ſad,
Thought it their dutie alſo to be clad
In the minds mourning habite: Princes are
Like the firſt mouer to the lower ſtarre,
Vnto the Subiects, by their ſwifter motion
They draw them ſtrongly to their owne deuotion:
And as a Horſe though full of force and ſpirit
Backt by a skilfull Rider ſeemes t'inherite
His will and iudgement, one while ſtanding ſtill,
Then pacing, running, bounding at his will,
So fares it twixt the Subiect and the King,
Backt by the Prince Rules ſnaffle doth him bring
To what his ſoueraigne pleaſe: the King's th' head,
The Subiect are the members, which doe ſpread
And grow from thence, now when the head 's diſeaſ'd
How ſhould the members but be much diſplea'd?
But here a doubt is mou'd, Muſt Subiects ſtill
Conforme their manners to their ſoueraignes will?
May not Ieruſalem with faire intent,
In this, or like perplexitie diſſent,

From

From troubled *Herod*, muſt the Princes faſhion
Still leade the Subiect to an imitation?
Not ſo, Kings are but men, and ſo may erre,
The King of Kings Edict we muſt preferre
Before a mortals: though *Auguſtus* ſay,
Doe this, if God forbide it, to obey
Is to become a traytor? Gods Command
Compar'd with mans, muſt like an Ocean ſtand,
To ſwallow vp that drop, to quench that ſparke,
As Idoll Dagon fell before the Arke;
As ſtarres are hidden when the Sun doth ſhine:
So humane lawes muſt ſtoope vnto diuine.

The tyrant thus with feare perturb'd, at laſt
Summons his wits together, and doth caſt
How to preuent all danger, and in minde
Reuoluing many things, at length doth finde
No better courſe can with his ſafety ſtand,
Then by an Edict ſent throughout his land,
To call a counſell, and leſt by delay
He might incurre a hazzard, men that day
With ſpeciall writs to further his intent
Goe out, and ſummon ſtraight a Parlaiment:
In this, though elſe full of impietie,
Herod to Kings a Preſident may be,
Not on their owne ſole iudgement to relie,
But to conſult with their graue counſels eie,
Which can ſee farre into high points of ſtate,
And deepeſt matters learnedly debate.

Well knew the cunning Tyrant how to make
A fit Election, and ſuch men to take
As his deſigne might further: for which cauſe
He conuocates the wiſeſt in the Lawes,
And thoſe whom he knew fitteſt to expound
Old Propheſies, and miſteries profound,

For Priests and Elders, with the learned Scribe,
He picks the best for fame from euery Tribe:
Had warre the subiect beene to be discust,
He would haue cal'd Commanders for the trust
Of martiall matters, fits them best that are
Well seene and practiz'd in the feats of warre,
But this was no such thing: *Herods* desire
Was by all meanes he could deuise, t'exquire
Where he to whom so many ages past
Iudah's Dominion was assign'd at last
Should take his birth: the true Messias place
Was the maine question that they had in chase.
They had not sate in consultation long,
But they were soone agreed, and yet among
So many, scarce there could be one found out
To be their speaker, and resolue the doubt
At last an aged Priest did vndertake
To be the tongue for all the rest, and make
A full relation of Prophetique truth,
So vp he rose, and spake what next ensueth.
Great King led sure by some diuiner light.
From the blacke darkenesse and Cymmerian night
Of the Worlds error since state pollicies
Thou leauest to search out heauens high mysteries:
Happy are we thy subiects to behold
Such goodnesse in such greatnesse, keepe thy hold,
Goe on in Grace and vertue though alone,
And thou shalt finde these props vphold thy throne:
Know thou bright Monarch Bethlehem is the place,
Which our Messias chosen hath, to grace
With his maiestique presence, when he shall
First see the light of this terrestiall Ball:
So write our ancient Prophets, 'mongst the rest,
Micah, whose Oracles are thus expresst:

And

And thou, O Bethlehem, in *Iudahs* Land,
Shalt not for leaſt among the Princes ſtand,
For out of thee ſhall come a King, which well
Shall know to guide my people Iſrael:
Thus in few words I doe my ſoueraigne ſhow,
What he with ſo much care deſir'd to know;
Herod well pleaſed with this, beſtowed a nod,
And they their adoration, as ſome god
Had ſent them a rich fauour: then they kiſt
His hand, and ſo th'aſſembly was diſmiſt.
But I (though *Herod*) not diſmiſſe you ſo,
Something I haue to ſay before ye goe,
O can ye be ſo light, yet ſeeme ſo graue,
Profeſſe ſo much zeale, yet ſo little haue.
Can you to *Herod* truely point the place
Where your *Meſſias* is, yet want the grace
To viſite him you ſelues? As larger ſtones
Erected in ſome high way for the nounce,
Direct the Paſſenger, but doe not moue
A iot from thence, where they were fixt in loue:
Or as the Bels loud repercuſſiue ſound
Cals vnto Church, neighbours that heare it round,
But in it ſelfe doth not leaſt motion feele,
To make it leaue it ſemicircled wheele:
So theſe could ſhew where Chriſt was to be found,
Yet neuer ſeeke him, all was ſhew and ſound,
No ſolid ſubſtance: They muſt needes be ill,
Who rich in knowledge, are ſo poore in will.
By this time *Herod* who in thought reuolu'd,
Many a Plot, and Plat-forme, was reſolu'd
To fixe on one for all: ſtiely he ſent
For the wiſe men to court, with whom he ſpent
Some time in free diſcourſe, the maine thus farre
Did reach, to know what time the eaſterne ſtarre,

Made his firſt apparition, this once told
Herod his minde did in theſe words vnfold.
With how great care my ſelfe haue ſought to know
This Infant Prince ye come to, well doth ſhow
The counſell call'd of late, call'd for your good
For now we know the place of his aboad:
That he is more then humane I beleeue,
Though clouded in obſcurity, and grieue
Time and occaſion will not giue me leaue
To goe this progreſſe with you, and receiue
That ſoule ſecuring comfort, and delight
Which you will meet with in the gracious ſight
Of ſuch an Obiect: but doe you goe on,
And ſearch with *Lynceus* eyes, to light vpon
The houſe that holds him, and if once you fortune
(For which I will the higher powers importune)
But bring you to him, after you haue done
That you are led to by Deuotion,
Doe but ſo much of happy time afford,
As may returne you backe, to bring me word,
And I my ſelfe ſubmitting ſtate and glory,
Although to aftertimes I make a ſtory,
Will wing'd in my deſire approach before him,
And falling proſtrate on the ground adore him.
O ſubtile Fox, that with ſo faire pretence
Couldſt ſuch a deed of cruelty commence,
As the ſweete Infants murder, for we finde
Such Lambe-like ſemblance hid a woluiſh minde:
Of Chriſt the Lambe he ſpake, as if he meant
To worſhip, when to worry he was bent:
Hypocriſie with a fine thred is ſpunne,
And ſeemes an Eagle that dares face the Sunne,
But once expos'd vnto that glorious light,
Shrinkes backe amaz'd, and canopies her ſight.

Herod

Herod by craft thought he might quickely gaine
What by plaine dealing he could not obtaine:
So Generalls in their exploits of warre,
Seeing the Lyons case will not reach farre,
That they may bring their Stratagem about
Peece on the Foxes skinne, to eke it out.
So the slie Fox as dead himselfe doth lay,
When he intends to make the largest prey:
So *Ioab* hugs him whom he meanes to slay,
So *Iudas* kisses whom he doth betray;
But *Herods* cunning doth himselfe beguile,
The Wolfe delayes, the Lambe escapes the while:
The wise men lend an eare vnto the King,
But that we finde answeare not any thing,
Yet since by silence they doe shew consent,
They are dismist, and *Herod* seems content.

Wednesdaies Meditation, or the fourth *Canto*.

The Argument.

By the starres helpe the wise men finde
Our Sauiour out, their gifts defind,
Admonished from God before
In Herods *sight they come no more.*

THe Magi finding not what they doe lacke,
Vpon Ierusalem soone turne their backe,
They had not trauail'd from the citty farre,
When the thrice welcome lustre of their starre

Did reappeare vnto them: God withdrawes
His b'eſsings from vs, that a little pauſe
Of abſence may endeare them: ſo the light
To one immur'd in priſon ſeemes more bright
When his enlargement cómes: ſo when the blaſt
Of ſome impetuous wind rends vp the Maſt
Of the Sea-toſſed-Hulke, ready as food
To ſtop the mouth of the deuouring flood,
A ſudden Calme is ſweeteſt: A diſeaſe
Makes health in the repurchaſt better p'eaſe:
Viciſſitude delights, and breedes reſpect,
Where long enioying generates neglect.
Had the wiſe men in all their iourney kept
The Starre a daily guide, they had not lept
For ioy, as they did now: indeed content
Might then haue kept pace with them, but as pent
Within too ſtrait a priſon, their vaſt ioy
Breakes forth into expreſſion, no annoy
Gauiſi ſunt gaud.o magno valde. Able to counter-check it, 'twas more great
Then text could well deſcribe, or I repeat.
Like as a mother of a ſonne belou'd
As her eye-ſight, from her eye-ſight remou'd
By a long abſence, and no newes arriuing,
Whether he doe conſort the dead or liuing,
Grieues at her hap, while heart-diſmaying feares
Vent out her ſorrow, not in words, but teares;
Which when paſt hope ſhe ſees him home returne,
Ceaſt any longer his deceaſe to mourne,
And rauiſht in her ioy, her ſpirits drownd
In ſuch a deluge, falls into a ſwound:
But hauing once thoſe powers recollected,
Seeing the obiect by her ſo affected,
Kiſſes, embraces, hugs her deareſt Boy,
Ready to skip out of her skin for ioy:

So

So fared it with the Magi; when the Starre
First disappear'd, it made no doubt a warre
Within them, sundry passions did contest,
But grief soone gets the mastery of the rest;
Yet long the crabbed tyrant doth not reigne,
Ere he be cleane depos'd, the Starre againe
By new appearing alters quite the state;
So ioy succeeds, and doth predominate;
Tun'd to a holy key, their tongues doth sound
Lauoltaes, while their heart doth dance a Round.
This Starre, whether an Angell in that fashion,
Or else some radiant holy inspiration, *Chrysost.*
Whether an errant Planet among the seuen,
Or one of those faire bodies fixt in heauen,
Sent downe to serue the turne, or else created
For this sole vse, and then anihilated,
I will not stand to question: on it went
As a sure conuoy, for the course it hent
Was not orbicular, but so direct
As they could wish a guide, whose best respect
Might leade them on; the motion of it slow,
And as it may be well concluded, low,
Else could it not haue kept an equall pace,
Nor yet hauefully pointed to the place.
Come to the house, as if it had no will
For any further motion, it stood still,
And ouer the poore cottage long did houer,
Or like some golden Canopie, did couer
The place of Christs abode: which once descride
By the wise men, its luster it did hide,
And ne'er was seene againe, although some tell,
Gliding from thence, it fell into a Well.
Interpreters doe by this Starre expresse,
Such as turne men to faith and righteousnesse.

Thrice

Thrice happy are thoſe Starres, which ſoules do guide
To Chriſt, and alſo there themſelues abide.
Enter'd they find the Infant with his Mother;
She puts not out her Child vnto another:
Me thinkes it is an error againſt kind,
That Mothers which haue ſtore of milke aſſign'd,
Should dry thoſe fountaines, to preſerue their beauty,
From whence their infants ſhould ſuck loue and duty,
Or that for ſtate, for trouble, or for pleaſure,
They ſhould expoſe ſuch an vnualew'd treaſure
As children are, vnto anothers care,
While they themſelues thereof will beare no ſhare.
The bleſſed Virgin bare a better mind,
To her owne iſſue then to proue vnkind,
Milke ſhe a bleſſing knew, dry breaſts a curſe,
Therefore ſhe dain'd her ſelfe to be a nurſe:
The wiſe men when they come, the Infant ſee
Hang at her breaſts, or dandled on her knee.
Now did the Magi meet their full deſire,
And might with *Simeon* wiſh they might expire:
Great was their ioy, when they beheld the Starre,
To ſee the Sun muſt needs tranſcend it farre:
Ioh. 8. 46. *Abraham* reioyc'd to ſee Chriſts day in ſpirit;
Your ioy muſt needs be greater, which inherit
A larger bleſſing, you in fleſh behold him,
And haue that fauour in your armes to fold him:
Luk. 10. 24. Prophets and Kings haue long deſir'd in vaine,
To ſee what you ſee, *Iudahs* Soueraigne;
Therefore (to him who beſt can cenſure things)
Happier you are then Prophets, or then Kings.
Yet let me ſay, 'twas not the ſight alone
That made theſe wiſe men happy, had they gone
No further, they had ne'er arriu'd at bliſſe,
Many eyes ſaw him which of that ſhall miſſe:

But these wise men when once they come before him,
Fall prostrate on the ground, and doe adore him:
Well might good *Bernard* this strange act admire,
That wise men, great men, who to sense were higher
Then what they fell so low to, should afford
Such worship to an Infant, poorely stord
With what should fit a Royall birth, the place,
Attendants, dressing, cradle had no grace
To moue such vassalage; sure God inspir'd
(A thing which well deserues to be admir'd)
Such Faith into their minds, as made them see
A Godhead clothed with humanity.
Being to come 'fore one of more command
Then Persiaes Monarke, with an empty hand *Athanasius.*
They dare not make approach, but ope their treasure,
And giue their owne in an abundant measure:
The gifts they dedicate to Christ are three, *Augustine.*
To note they did adore the Trinitie:
Or else to shew, the person they ador'd,
Although but one, was with three Natures stor'd,
Deity, Soule and Body; or to bring
His threefold Office of Priest, Prophet, King,
To our remembrance; therefore some doe call
These, sacramentall gifts; Prophetical *Cyprian.*
Others entitle them; the first was Gold, *Rupertus.*
Which with a King doth correspondence hold; *Basil.*
Or else they offer plenty of their Ore,
That to supply their wants they might haue store
When Christ should flie to Egypt: they bestow
Mirrhe, that a mortall man we might him know:
The Frankinsence they offer doth define,
As God he must haue sacrifice Diuine.
Againe, pure Gold, cleare Mirrhe, sweet Frankinsence,
Doe each of them afford a morall sence;

Gold.

Gold ſignifies pure doctrine, Faith ſincere,
A charity refin'd, which God holds deare:
Myrrhe repreſents the teares of penitence
Shed for our ſinnes, a mortified ſence
To worldly matters: Frankinſence doth ſhew
Perfum'd deuotion, where we muſt beſtow
The Incenſe of our prayers: theſe well preſented,
Are offerings wherewith God is much contented.
The wiſe men hauing their oblation ended,
And ſeene, and known what might be comprehended,
Take leaue, and doe betake them to their reſt,
Deeming themſelues to be not meanely bleſt
In ſuch a happy iſſue, now their mind
At quiet, a ſweet ſleepe their ſence doth bind.
About the dead time of the ſilent night,
They ſaw, or thought they ſaw a glorious light;
In it a ſhape more bright, an Angell ſtood,
Who came from heauen to warne thē for their good,
And hauing gently wak'd them, with a voice
Able to charme attention, and reioyce
The very heart to heare it, thus he ſaid;
Let not your minds with terror be diſmaid,
Almighty God, whoſe I reioyce to be,
Hath ſent me to you on this embaſie:
The honour which you lately did his Sonne,
Hath ſo much fauour from his goodneſſe wonne,
That knowing you are bent to vndertake
A dangerous iourney, he deſires to make
The hazzard knowne vnto you: Iuda's King,
Herod I meane, is rather any thing,
Then what he ſeem'd vnto you: his pretence
Of worſhip, when in that cloſe conference
He brake about the Infant, was a wile,
Both you and him the better to beguile;

For

For in his heart he plotted long before,
To wash his hands within the purple gore
Of his liue blood, and chose for this intent
Your simplenesse to be his instrument;
Meaning when he had seru'd his turne, to reaue
You of your deerest liues, striuing to leaue
A president vnto posterity,
Of an vnmatcht, vnheard of tyranny:
Be mindfull of my words, and take good heed
How you returne to *Herod*, rather speed
Into your Country by some other way,
For no small danger waits vpon delay.
This said, he quickly vanisht out of sight,
And they fell to their rest that rest of night.
No sooner did the gray-eyed Morne appeare,
And by her blushing shew the Sunne was neare,
But to their iourney they themselues addresse,
And mindfull of the vision, which did presse
Their memories afresh, they leaue the rode
Which leades to Salem, though the tract were broad,
And ride through lanes, and by-waies, till at last
The confines of Iudea they are past.
Secure from danger, their post-haste they stay,
And trauaile on at leasure, by the way
Discoursing with ioy not to be expreest,
How highly they were in that iourney blest:
Ere many daies their Country smoke appeares,
And they in peace at home liue many yeeres.
I cannot leaue this part of history,
Till I haue shewed a vsefull mystery:
Herod by the vnanimous assent
Of Fathers, doth the diuell represent,
They then which by Gods mercy are set free
From bondage, worse then Egypts slauery,

Satans

Satans oppreſſion, muſt abhorre ſuch bands,
And take good heed they fall not in his hands.
The ſilly Bird hauing eſcap'd the net,
Farre from the fatall place her ſelfe will get.
The Lambe which from the Wolfe hath got away,
Will no more venture from the flocke to ſtray.
If by the Goſpels Starre we once are brought
To Chriſt, let vs by no temptation wrought,
Turne backe to *Herod*; but forſaking quite
The workes of darkneſſe, in Gods Word delight.
Indeed I know we are to trauaile farre
1.Pet.2.11. To our owne Country, in this world we are
But ſtrangers: he that liues the longeſt age,
Doth waſte his life in tedious pilgrimage:
Heauen is our happy home, and we muſt ſtriue,
Though cloſe by hell we paſſe, how to arriue
Vnto that bleſſed Harbor, by the way
Remouing all ſuch rubs as would vs ſtay.
But let me tell you, leſt we chance to ſtray,
Our iourney thither lyes another way:
'Tis not the too-too common road of vice,
Which is the paſſage vnto Paradice;
Matth. 7.13. Ah no, the path which vnto bliſſe doth lead
Is ſtraight, and few they are that doe it tread:
Immutatio viæ emendatio vitæ: Then, onely then, another way we take,
When of our vicious life a change we make.
Euſebius Emiſſenus. Like as the Prophet which was ſent to cry
1.King.13. Againſt that Altar of impiety,
Set vp by *Ieroboam*, had command
Not to goe backe vnto his natiue Land
By the ſame way he came: the like haue we,
VVe muſt our old waies leaue, and ſpeedily
As we new creatures are, new wayes enquire,
Such as may bring vs whither we deſire.

He

He that by ſinne hath left heauens vſuall track,
Muſt by repentance a new way come back.
Haſt thou walkt on in luſts impurity?
Returne another way, by chaſtety.
Didſt thou with pride a ſtately march maintaine?
Another way humility regaine.
In auarice didſt thou delight to moue?
Returne another way, and walke in loue.
Did ſharpe contention make thee trudge to Law?
From that miſleading path thy feet withdraw,
And ſtriue to liue in peace. Did thy heart range
In vſuries wilde maze? O let it change
(Though much againſt thy natiue conſtitution)
With good *Zacheus* to a reſtitution.
In fine, if we wander from truth, or ſtray
Neuer ſo little from the narrow way,
We miſſe our path, and ſo abberring rome
From the right way, ſhould leade vs to our home.
And therefore as the trauailer in doubt
Which way to take, with heed doth looke about
To ſpie ſome houſe, or perſon, which may be
A helpe to him in his perplexitie,
And neuer leaue enquiring, till he know
Which way he muſt decline, and which way goe:
So if yee be in doubt which path to hold,
With *Salomons* faire Spouſe get to the fold,
Where ſhepheards keepe their flock, of them enquire, Cant. 1. 8.
And they will ſatisfie your iuſt deſire;
Then hauing found it, keepe it with delight,
And neither turne to the left hand, nor right:
So ſhall ye find what euer may betide
In your way thither, twill you ſafely guide
To your owne Country, where you ſhall poſſeſſe
More good then heart can thinke, or tongue expreſſe.

Thurſdaies

Thurſdaies Meditation, or the fifth *Canto.*

The Argument.

An Angell is to Ioſeph *ſent,*
To tell him Herods *foule intent:*
He with his charge to Egypt flies,
And there remaines till Herod *dies.*

NO ſooner had the Magi left the Land
Of Paleſtine, but He which hath command
Of all that know a being, and can ſee
Things plotted with the greateſt ſecrecy,
And eaſily elude them, did intend
To *Herods* proiect a vaine, fruitleſſe end:
God can (though man be crafty to deuiſe)
Infatuate the Counſels of the wiſe,
And free his children from what may annoy them,
Though malice ioyne with cunning to deſtroy them:
So *Pharaoh*, who from Iſrael will not part,
Wants of his will, yet for it feeles the ſmart:
So *Saul*, who practiz'd *Dauid* to confound,
Did himſelfe fall, and *Iſhai*s ſonne was croun'd:
So *Herod* who did ſeeke to haue depriu'd
Chriſt of his life, did find himſelfe ſhort liu'd.
Thus Gods decree while hund, doth take effect,
And humane wiſedome while it ſtriues, is checkt.
Now were all humane eyes ſhut vp in ſleepe,
But ſuch whom care, or paine did open keepe,

Conſilium diuinum dum deuitatur, impletur, humana ſapientia dum reluctatur, comprehenditur, Greg.

When

When a bleſt Angell (Angels are prepar'd
To be to Gods Elect a ſurer guard
Then mortals can be) vnto *Ioſeph* came,
Sent to that iuſt man in *Iehouahs* Name,
Whoſe Sun-like preſence had ſo bright aray,
That it made mid-night to excell mid-day:
Yet the good man feareleſſe, becauſe vntainted,
And with ſuch apparitions pre-acquainted,
Expected the euent; when thus made bold,
The Angell did his Embaſy vnfold:
O thou which from the Lord ſuch grace haſt won,
To be the Foſter-father of his Sonne,
And husband (though thou liueſt more like a brother)
Vnto that euer bleſſed Virgin Mother,
Looke well vnto thy charge, the Wolfe doth watch
With bloody mind, both Lamb and Eue to catch,
That he may prey vpon them, therefore take
The tender Infant, and his Mother make
Co-partner in thy flight, to Egypt flee,
There's roome and ſafety for thy Charge and Thee:
There plant thy habitation, and remaine,
Till thou mayſt ſafely venture backe againe,
Which ſafety when the time ſhall once afford,
Ile be a Meſſenger to bring thee word.
This meſſage ended, backe the Angell goes,
When preſently good *Ioſeph* doth diſpoſe
Himſelfe to Gods command, that very night
With his deare charge he 'gins to take his flight.
But though ſuch haſte *Ioſeph* made to be gone,
Wee'll ſtay a while, and meditate hereon.
That woman in the vncouth Wilderneſſe, Reuel. 12.
Whom neere her time the Dragon did diſtreſſe,
One thinkes, doth repreſent the Church; another
(Not much amiſſe) the bleſſed Virgin Mother:

Indeed the Dragon ſuits with *Herod* well,
And *Mary* is the womans paralell:
The ſtory tells vs, that the woman fled
The Dragons furie, when deliuered:
So was the bleſſed Virgin glad to flie
With her young Babe from *Herods* cruelty:
The Dragon there ſtood ready to deuoure
The Child, when he was borne; and euery houre
Herod did gape for newes, that he might ſlay
The bleſſedſt Infant euer yet ſaw day:
Yet Child and Mother both eſcaped there:
So Chriſt and *Mary* both preſerued were:
As *Moſes* guarded by Gods mighty hand,
Came ſafely off from the vniuſt command
Of perſecuting *Pharoah*, and became
A mighty Captaine in *Iehouahs* Name
To quell the pride of *Pharoah*, and ſet free
The Hebrewes from Egyptian ſlauery:
So by Gods prouidence did Chriſt eſcape
From Dragon *Herods* mouth which wide did gape,
To ſwallow him aliue, that he might be
Vnto his people in captiuity
A mighty leader, and the power quell
Of Sinne, and Sathan, of the Graue, and Hell,
And ſo in fine his Iſrael ſafely bring
From bondage worſe then vnder Egypts King:
Finally when the Dragon did perceiue
His force againſt the woman vaine, did leaue
To perſecute her, yet did inly burne
In indignation, and his fury turne
To warre vpon the remnant of her ſeed,
Hoping to meet there with ſucceſsfull ſpeed:
So *Herod* fruſtrated of his deſire,
Suffers his heart to burne in flaming fire

Of

Of furious rage, and will needes wreake his ſpleene
On ſilly infants, but this ſhalbe ſeene
More largely, in the progreſſe of this ſtory,
Chriſts flight a while keeps back the Infants glory.
Like as a gardner when he ſpies a plant,
Full of faire hope fit elbow roome to want,
As nigh ſome ouerſpreading tree, bereauen
Of the Suns heat, and the fat dew of heauen,
With care remoues it to another place,
Where it thriues mainly, in a little ſpace:
So when the Lord his Sonne that plant did ſee
Plac'd to neare *Herod* that farre ſpreading tree,
Yet fruitleſſe, therefore worthy to be feld
Leſt the vnholſome ſhadow death ſhould peld
To the neare neighbouring plant, his powerfull hand
Doth now tranſplant him to another land.
He that in flight our refuge is heere flies,
He that aſſiſts vs 'gainſt our enemies,
Auoids the furie of his mortall foes,
And like an exile into Egypt goes:
That in ſuch kind of dire calamities,
He might with vs the better ſympathize:
Our Sauiour Chriſt without a Gyges ring
Could haue obſcur'd his perſon from the King.
Or had he pleaſ'd what euer was intended
'Gainſt *Herods* malice haue himſelfe defended:
He that by fire did his *Eliah* guard
He that an hoſt of Angels had prepar'd
Eliſha to ſecure, he that did ſaue
Daniel from Lyons, *Lazarus* from the graue,
Had it ſeem'd good could heere haue gon as farre
And quail'd the force of *Herods* men of warre:
But he choſe rather to ſepoſe his might,
And to expoſe his perſon vnto flight:

Either to ſhew what he himſelfe doth ſay,
Ioh.18. He came no worldly Scepter here to ſway:
Or elſe by his example to declare,
The Church for perſecution muſt prepare:
Or it may be to teach vs, that the Lord
No extraordinary will afford,
When we haue ordinary meanes at hand,
By which we may withdraw, and quit the Land,
To worke our ſafety: or to teach in fine
Vs perſonall perſecution to decline:
So *Moſes* fled from *Pharaohs* cruelty:
So *Dauid* from his ſonnes impiety:
So *Paul*, no ſafety being in the Towne,
Was in a basket by the wall let downe,
That he might ſcape the danger; ſo againe
He fled from Salem, fearing to be ſlaine:
So *Polycarpe* in perſecutions heat,
Euſebius. Did by aduice, for a while change his ſeate:
So *Athanaſius* did often flie
From that blood thirſting Arrian tyranny:
Socrates So when *Iuſtina*, *Valentinians* Mother,
ſcholaſticus. Her rage againſt S. *Ambroſe* could not ſmother,
He fled from Millaine: *Chryſoſtome* like fate
Drew from Bizantium, to ſhun the hate
Eudoxia bare vnto him: Chriſt our Sauiour,
When paſt an Infant, had the like behauiour:
So when the Phariſes a counſell tooke
Mat.12.15. Againſt his life, their preſence he forſooke:
Luk.4. So when the Nazarens malicious will
Iohn.8. Would throw him headlong from the City hill,
He left the place: ſo when with fell deſpite
The Iewes did ſeeke to ſtone him, from their ſight
He hid himſelfe: to make this truth more plaine,
He giues this as a precept, to remaine

To all succeeding times, when tyrants haue,
Shall rather seeke your liues, then your estate,
Out of one City to another flie,
And saue your selues from their sterne cruelty:
This is to be like cunning Serpents wise,
When innocence of Doues will not suffice.
But we must know our Sauiour fled not death,
Out of a feare to leese his vitall breath:
Onely for this cause he did now foreslow it,
That afterwards he better might bestow it:
He meant to lay it downe, as a rare gift
Of his owne bounty, not by *Herods* drift,
By his freewill he did intend to die,
And not out of a forc'd necessity.
But seeing thou wouldst haue thy Sonne, O Lord,
To flie, wherefore to Egypt so abhord?
Can that to thy belou'd safe harbor giue,
In which thy Israel did in bondage liue.
Haue the Egyptians those plagues forgot
Thou didst impose vpon them? Will they not
Study reuenge? Or may not *Ioseph* feare,
If Egypts King of his arriuall heare,
He shall be taken for an Hebrew Spie,
And by some vncouth torment forc'd to die.
O let not flesh and blood expostulate
With Gods determination, or debate
The matter any further, God who drawes
Honey from Hemlock with the Bee, can cause
Each place that is to serue vnto his will,
And safety raise euen from those would kill.
The time was once when his almighty Hand
Threw plagues apace on the Egyptian Land,
The worst of which wherewith they were annoi'd
Was, when their first-borne-issue was destroi'd;

Mat. 10. 23.

Mat. 10. 16.

Mortem distulit non fugit: Chrisost:

Morietur non vinculo necessitatis, sed proposito voluntatis: Fulgen.

To recompence this losse he sends his owne
And by his bounty his great loue makes knowne.
Exod.10. Once making *Moses* his fit instrument,
Cymmerian darknesse on their Land he sent.
And which was worse, groping for light as blind
Suffred them liue in darknesse of their mind.
Therfore his sonne, that Sun shall now arise
To giue them light, which doe not shut their eyes
Against his splendour, for as stories tell,
When he came thither all their Idolls fell.
And as we read that *Ioseph* best belou'd
Of *Iacob*, from his Fathers eye remou'd
By enuie of his bretheren, was conuayed
To Egypt where by Gods direction stay'd;
He was a kind of Sauiour to the land,
In keeping famine out which did command
After a seuen yeares plenty: so more want
Threatning to ruine Egypt which grew scant
Of grace and goodnesse, Christ a Sauiour came,
And in great mercy did preserue the same.
For he the true bread is where he doth dwell
All famine from the soule he doth expell.
By this time *Ioseph* whom much care did presse,
Had gotten all things in a readinesse,
And in the couert of the shady night
Begins his iourney, darknesse could not fright
Non attendit verus obediens quale sit quod præcipitur: hoc solo contentus quia præcipitur. Bernard.
Him or his charge: obedience doth contend
How to please God although it sense offend.
Not into what commanded is, it pries,
But that it is commanded doth suffice:
Good *Ioseph* murmures not at the great paine
Or the long iourney he must entertaine,
He staggers not in faith, that he doth flie
Which must saue others from their misery:

But

But as he came from Abraham, behaues
Himselfe like *Abraham*, in his mind he graues
How ready the glad father was to goe
When God commanded, and should I be slow,
To execute said he what God enioynes,
I should want worth, to issue from such loynes
Mans heart must be like paper, cleane, and white,
Wheron the Lord what he shall please may write:
Or like to waxe well suppled by the hand,
Be soft and pliant to his iust command
We must in all things, seeme they good or ill,
Conforme our wishes to our soueraignes will:
Faith and obedience stand not to dispute,
But are still ready prest to execute:
Our God, obedience doth so highly prize,
That he prefers it before sacrifice. 1. Sam. 15.
And worthily, for they who with consent
A legall sacrifice to God present,
But other flesh, the flesh of beasts doe till,
Where we obeying sacrifice our will. *In victimis aliena caro obedientia vero voluntas propria mactatur: Greg.*
Thus did good *Joseph*, whom no let could stay
No not so long as for the lightsome day:
And well in the black night did they begin
Their trauaile from a place more black in sinne.
Now gan the day from out the east appeare,
Whose comfortable light their hearts did cheare,
And ere the Sun had fully shone an hower
They found themselues got safe from *Herods* power:
At length in Egypt they arriue what towne
Did giue them harbour, the text sets not downe
Nor will I seeke to know, there they remaine,
Till *Herods* death did call them back againe.
All this saith the Euangelist was done,
To firme that prophecie which said, My Sonne

From Egypt haue I call'd: the literall ſence
I know, concerneth Iſrael, who from thence
Was brought by mighty hand, yet hath reſpect
To Chriſt, as types doe vpon truths reflect:
And as Gods people, Iſrael, did ſtay
A time in Egypt, till the Lord made way
For their departure; ſo his bleſſed Sonne
Had for a while his habitation
In the ſame Egypt, till the Lord did call him,
Whom there I leaue to that which did befall him.

Fridaies Meditation, or the ſixth *Canto.*

The Argument.

The Kings fierce rage, his men of warre
The innocents doe maſſacre:
Rachel *doth mourne her heauy loſſe,*
And will no comfort in her croſſe.

TIme now (which erſt did vnto *Iudahs* King
Seeme to moue forward with a lazy wing)
Made him ſuſpect, or rather plainely ſee
The wiſe men did delude his ſubtilty:
And there was reaſon for it, he that thought
To mocke, is mockt, and takes but what he brought;
The law of taliation did require
Neque enim lex iuſtior vlla: Ouid. He ſhould meet this euent: the fitteſt hire
For fraud is ſlie deceit, and they that cheriſh
Diſſembling, in their art doe iuſtly periſh:

God

God on these men his iudgements doth expresse, Iob 5.13.
And takes the wise in their owne craftinesse.
Now this delusion in the King begets
An indignation, and in rage him sets.
When Tyrants cannot by their craft preuaile,
In a red Sea of cruelty they saile.
But why, O *Herod*, wert thou thus perplext?
Why doest thou rage? or wherefore art thou vext?
Didst thou not know that Christs birth was diuine?
Or wert thou blind, because the Sunne did shine?
Didst thou not conuocate from euery Tribe
Many chiefe Priests, many a learned Scribe?
And did not they by ancient Prophecy
Resolue the truth of this deepe mystery?
Didst thou not know the wise men came thus farre
To worship Christ, led by a glorious Starre?
Thy cheeke should rather blush, then thy heart flame,
And looke red, not with anger, but with shame,
That such Barbarians, which were farre below thee,
Should in their zeale to God so much outgoe thee:
The loue and faith wherewith they were inspir'd
Thou shouldst haue imitated, and admir'd:
For vnlesse thou didst altogether shun
Prophetique truth, so much it might haue won
Vpon thy iudgement, that by iust compare
Of passed things with such as present are,
Thou mightst conclude, this was not a delusion
Of the wise men, but a confusion,
Which God, who sometimes counterchecks a King,
Vpon thy wicked purpose meant to bring.
But say thou hadst some iniury receiu'd,
And by the cunning Magi wert deceiu'd,
How had the silly Innocents offended,
That so much mischiefe is 'gainst them intended:

O why is their vniuſt deſtruction ſought?
which nere ſo much as wrong'd thee in a thought,
Surely, ſhould Iordan lend thee all her ſtore,
It could not waſh away the purple gore
That hangs vpon thee, with thee ſtill ſhall bide
The title of a bloudy Homicide.
Thou ſought'ſt for Chriſt, but went'ſt too far about,
Tis faith, not furie, which muſt finde him out;
O fooliſh *Herod* which doſt thinke t' expell
Him that will ſtill be King of Iſraell,
Yea King of Heauen and Earth, in ſpite of thee
Out of thy poore, and petty liberty:
O wicked *Herod*, and of lewd behauiour,
Who fearing thy ſucceſſor, hat'ſt thy ſauiour:
O bloudy *Herod*, which by the fell death
Of harmleſſe children, wouldſt prolong thy breath:
But little admiration it requires,
That Tyrants ſeeke to compaſſe their deſires,
Or found their thrones on ſlaughtered innocence,
Pharaoh long ſince had taught him to diſpence
With murders of that ranke, who to ſecure
His crowne, made *Abrahams* yſſue to endure
A heauy burden, while he did command
Exod. 1. To drowne their yſſue male throughout the land.
So did *Abimelec* the baſe borne ſonne
Of that couragious warriour, *Gedeon*,
Who through the bloud of 70. brothers waded,
Vnto the Crowne moſt wrongfully inuaded,
Herod was more vnnaturall then theſe,
'Gainſt his owne ſonne he could not rage appeaſe,
But fearing he ſhould the Meſſias be,
Among the reſt he wrought his tragedy:
Therefore *Auguſtus* did this ſaying vſe,
If I were bound to liue among the Iewes,

With

With greater willingneſſe I would be ſwine
Then ſonne to *Herod*: for by law deuine
Swines fleſh forbid the Hebrewes they did giue
A kinde of priuiledge the beaſts might liue,
Whereas King *Herod* a worſe beaſt did grutch
Vnto his owne childe to afford ſo much.

Malo Herodis porcum quam filium eſſe: Macrobius.

The Lyon will not tender Infants ſlay,
Vnleſſe meere hunger force him to ſuch prey,
O With what hunger then was *Herod* wag'd,
When he againſt ſo many Infants rag'd,
With hunger of ambition, which of all
The greateſt hunger we may iuſtly call:
Hunger of raigning ſure muſt needes be great,
Which to appeaſe it, muſt haue ſo much meate;
So many Infants fleſh, that thirſt is ſore
Which nought can ſatisfie but crimſin gore,
Enioy bloud thirſting *Herod*, re-inioy
Thy kingdome ſafely, free from all annoy,
He that aboue doth Heauenly crownes beſtow,
Gapes not for earthly ſcepters here belowe,
Such earth-bred honor Chriſt doth much deſpiſe,
Elephants take no mice, nor Eagles flies:
Though he of power be for to caſt thee downe,
Yet feare no depriuation of thy crowne,
For though two Kings can in one kingdome raigne,
No more, then Heauen can two bright Suns ſuſtaine,
Yet euery King may with him, in him daigne
His kingly Lord, his true Meſſias raigne,
As the faire Heauen with many Starres is dight,
And with the Sun, from whom they take their light:
Only learne mercy from this potent one,
And heape not bloud ſo long vpon thy Throne,
Till it become ſo ſlippery, as to threat
Each ſtep thou tak'ſt, to caſt thee from thy ſeat.

But

But rage, like to the belly, hath no eares,
To reason deafe, it onely passion heares,
Aduice is vaine, say what I can or will,
Herod will be himselfe, a tyrant still.
They say, that Bee who of the rest is King,
Either hath none, or doth not vse a sting:
Surely this man, whom wretched Bethlehem sees
Reeke in the blood of Infants, not of Bees,
But Waspes was King, for wasplike full of spleene,
2. King. 2. He thrusts his poysonous sting (so great his teene)
Into the flesh of children, and doth kill
Those, who to hurt him had nor power, nor will.
Indeed two Beares did certaine children slay,
But cause they mockt Gods Prophet: thou then they
More fierce destroyst the guiltlesse: fearefull man,
Do'st thou dread silly childrens force? or can
Faint cowardize with thee preuaile so farre,
Thou shouldst gainst Infants wage such bloody warre.
Great praise no doubt, and many a worthy spoile
Thou shalt enioy, by giuing them the foile.
The noble Elephants will not inuade
The weaker sort of beasts: thou shakst thy blade
At sucking children, and sendst men of might,
To challenge those that know not how to fight.
There is a story of great *Constantine*,
How true, the Authors credit, and not mine,
Must answer: but the matter Ile relate,
And leaue the question further to debate:
Before he came to Christianity,
The Prince was troubled with a Leprosie;
To cure this sickenesse the aduice and care
Of his Phisicians would haue him prepare
A Bath of Infants blood: sure here the Diuill
Prompted his Doctors to so great an euill:

But

But being by Gods prouidence conuerted,
He from ſo foule a ſlaughter was diuerted
By ſoules Phiſicians, who doe well aſſure him,
Baptiſme a Bath more powerfull is to cure him.
He hearkens to them, is baptiz'd, and free
Both from the bodies, and ſoules leproſie.
Behold, ambition *Herods* ſoule inuades,
Like a foule Leproſie; Satan perſwades
(Such is hells phiſicke) naught will doe him good,
Vnleſſe he bathe himſelfe in Infants blood;
And not the opening of a veine or two,
No, but their life blood this great cure muſt doe:
Therefore to ſatisfie the ſoule-ſicke King,
Each tender Babe muſt empty all his Spring;
And now God lets the Wolfe the Lambes deuoure,
Without reſtraining of his rage, or power,
He puts no bridle into *Herods* noſe,
But lets him take full ſwinge in his diſpoſe,
Becauſe he knew how to draw good from ill,
And make this wicked action ſerue his will:
From Lyons mouth ſweet honey he can take,
And Marahs bitter waters wholeſome make.
Herod in this his rage doth type out thoſe
Of the malignant Church, who ſtill are foes
To the Church Militant, and by their will
Religion in it infant age would kill:
Herod like malice, and impiety,
Egyptian, Babylonian cruelty.
It is (though tyrants hold theſe termes in ſcorne)
To ſmother piety as ſoone as borne,
To quench Religion while it is a ſparke,
And drowne poore ſoules by keeping from the Arke.
Againe, in *Herods* foule deſigne of blood,
Satans condition may be vnderſtood,

Who

Who ſeekes not only by malicious will,
Chriſt while an Infant in our heart to kill,
But many children more, euery good thought,
Though it be neuer into action brought,
To make thoſe babes good motions in vs die,
Though they want ſtrength to goe in act, and lie
In meditations cradle, is his glory,
But I leaue types to proſecute the ſtory:
While *Herod* inly vext, became thus wilde,
With furious rage, the Deuill rockt his childe,
But would not let him ſleepe: like ſome mad beaſt,
By nature feirce, if wounded will not reſt,
But doubling his fell fury and euen blinde
With rage, regards no longer how to finde
His foe that hurt him, but with head and feete
Fiercely aſſailes the next that he doth meete:
So *Herod*, who conceiu'd himſelfe much wrong'd
By the wiſe men, for whoſe returne he long'd,
His hope deluded like one robd of ſence
Wreakes his reuengefull ſpleene on Innocence:
For full of doubtfull thoughts as well as ſinnes,
To reaſon with himſelfe he thus begins:
What childe is this? that hath from Heauen his birth
Foretold, ere it be perfected on earth:
Vnto the World himſelfe he hath not ſhowne,
Yet is to thoſe that neuer ſaw him knowne:
Ouer no people yet he hath command,
And wiſe men, great men, leaue their natiue land
To waite vpon him: o who is the wight
That ouercomes me, and yet does not fight:
That like a tyrant ouer me doth raigne,
Ere he the kingdome (I poſſeſſe) obtaine:
If he already me of ſtate beguile,
What will he doe if he encreaſe a while?

Poore

Poore as he is, he is more fear'd, then I
With all my riches, and authority:
Or elſe theſe wiſe men or impoſtors rather,
(For by their dealing leſſe I cannot gather)
Whom my intelligencers I did make,
Would not haue faltered with me for his ſake,
But here I vow, who euer doe be friend him
Nor heauen, nor hel ſhall from my power defend him:
No I will make (if my vnhappy fate
Croſſe not my will) Bethlem as deſolate
Of Infants, as this Infant hath made me
Of comfort, ſince his new nam'd ſoueraignty.
Thus he reſolues in rage, and what that ſtill
To raſh attempts a Counſellor full ill,
Suggeſts vnto him, he in action brings,
So ſoone men execute the will of Kings:
And now come other actors on the ſtage,
The bloudy inſtruments of *Herods* rage
Made ready to preſent vnto our eye
A tragicke ſceane of horrid cruelty.
Not to examine who they were, we ſee
Subiect and King full well, and ill agree,
Tyrants doe neuer want fit Inſtruments,
To execute their very worſt intents:
Would wicked *Saul* haue the Lords Prieſts be ſlaine,
Doeg the motion ſoone will entertaine:
Doth *Dauid* plot to ſtop *Vrtahs* breath?
Joab will ſet him in the face of death:
Doth *Iezabell* 'gainſt *Nabaths* life conſpire?
The elders will effect her lewde deſire:
The world yet neuer knew a Prince ſo vicious,
But that he ſhould haue men to be officious,
Such as account it an eſpeciall grace
To doe their Lords will be it nere ſo baſe:

The

The officers of *Herod* bare this mind,
Ready to goe when he their warrant ſign'd.
And now ſuppoſe them vnto Bethlehem come,
Ready to act the tyrants fatall doome,
While the Sunne hides his head at ſuch a ſight,
As if a Noone he meant to make it night,
And with blacke clouds did couer his ſad face,
Grieuing that men ſhould haue ſo little grace:
The melting heauens doe alſo ſhowre downe raine,
As if they wept for the poore Infants paine;
Euen the walles there in a cold dew ſtood,
As ſtruck with horror, to ſee ſo much blood:
Yet theſe feele no remorce, nor once deſiſt
From the commanded murther, but perſiſt
In that abhorred worke of cruelty,
Which ſhall them brand with laſting infamy:
With their ſwords drawne, that none this courſe may (ſtay,
Into mens houſes they do force their way.
Here they an Infant from the cradle ſnatch,
There from the fathers armes another catch,
And the poore childrens ſad deſtruction wrought,
Ere the amazed parents had a thought
Of any danger neere: ſome they tranſpierce
With their blood-thirſting ſword, others in fierce
And ſauage manner, they deuide aſunder,
While they that own them ſtand ſtone ſtill in wonder.
Me thinkes in one place I ſome father heare
(At his deare Infants danger ſtruck with feare)
Like *Niſus* in the Poet, or more milde,
Crie out vnto the Butcher of his childe;
O ſpare my ſonne! or if you blood muſt ſpill,
Here turne your ſwords, the grieued father kill?
I might, he durſt not, could not entertaine
A thought of wrong vnto his Soueraigne.

Me

Me thinkes I in another place behold
An Infant ſtab'd, whoſe pretty armes lay hold
About his mothers breaſt, whence he doth draine
Milke, that in blood runs out as faſt againe,
While the affrighted mother, with her hands
Heau'd vp, like *Niobe*, turn'd Marble, ſtands.
In euery place that doth afford an age
Markt out for ſlaughter, death and fury rage,
While ỹ poore ſoules, ſome for their mothers crying,
Some ſmiling on their murderers, are dying.
O here a while your ſpeedy haſte forbeare
Compaſſionate parents, and vouchſafe a teare!
Thinke but what ſad, what ſoule-affrighting ſight
Theſe ſaw, when they were rob'd of their delight.
Suppoſe your Infants whom you highly prize,
Snatcht from your armes, and ſlaine before your eyes,
What would you doe in ſuch a caſe as this?
Nay, what would you not doe? ſurely amiſſe
I doe conceiue, or elſe your ſorrow would
Be greater farre, then all their ſuffering could;
While from their pretty eyes ſalt teares did trill,
Your pierced hearts would liquid blood diſtill;
And euery wound their bodies ſhould receiue
Frõ murderers hands, your very ſoules would cleaue.
And yet behold ſuch was the wofull ſtate
Of that late happy Citie, fortunate
Erſt in her Sauiour, who there firſt drew breath,
But now moſt wretched in her childrens death,
Whileſt by this fearefull act of ſinne and ſhame,
Of Bethlehem a Bethauen it became.
But not this bloody act could yet aſſwage
Either their cruelty, or *Herods* rage,
No, the neare Villages in her hard fate
The wofull City muſt aſſociate:

Not one poore cottage can keepe out pale death,
Wherein a child sucks in an infant breath.
They passe through all the coasts about, and striue,
That not one Infant may be left aliue:
Their charge so ready are they to fulfill,
And satisfie the Tyrant in his will.
O mercilesse and matchlesse murderers,
How can you thinke when iustice once preferres
A bill against your liues, and death you brings
'Fore the Tribunall of the King of Kings
To answer this foule act? when their blood cries
To Heauen for vengeance, it will not suffice
That you had *Herods* Warrant, Gods Command
Did you knew well 'gainst murder firmely stand.
But how haue I forgot you all this while,
Poore Innocents, delay must not beguile
You of your worthy sufferings ample glory,
The which alone deserues to make a story.
The Church on blood, and the not doing wrong,
But suffering for it, hath foundation strong,
By persecution she receiues renowne,
And martyrdome giues her a glorious Crowne.
The blood of *Abel* at the Worlds creation
Of this truth giues a pregnant demonstration:
So likewise in the Gospels pupillage,
The blood of Infants, slaine by *Herods* rage.
There be two colours which God much delight,
And they are white and red: first, the pure white
Of innocence, then martyrdomes blood red,
And both these in the Infants largely spread:
Not all the coates, though quartered nere so faire,
Where men their armes emblazon, to repaire
The ancient Gentry of their Family,
Which time would weare out but for Heraldry,

Are

Are halfe ſo glorious, as thoſe faire Armes were,
Theſe Innocents did in their Scutcheon beare,
For, croſſe of Gules in Argent field they carry,
Well may their Creſt be a rich Crowne of glory.
Some doubt, but ſuch either doe iudgement want,
Or elſe of charitie are wondrous ſcant,
Whether theſe Infants here depriu'd of breath,
Were ſau'd or no from an eternall death:
But what ſhould this ſtrange dubitation breed?
Is not Gods promiſe made vnto the ſeed
Of faithfull parents? Were not theſe receiu'd
Into the couenant ere of life bereau'd?
They were, they were, therefore their cry did turne
To ioy, and they now laugh, who then did mourne:
O bleſſed Infants, whom the cunning Diuell
By his temptation neuer led to euill,
With death you ſtruggled hard, and for that ſtrife,
You are now crowned with immortall life.
Sure *Herods* flattery could nere haue wrought you
So great a bleſſing as his fury brought you.
O bleſſed age, which could not ſpeake Chriſts Name,
Yet was thought worthy to die for the ſame:
Sure you were borne in a thrice happy time,
Felicities high toy ſo ſoone to clime.
You are ſcarce paſt the threſhold of your birth,
When life comes forth to meet you, and from earth
Takes you to heauen; you doe no ſooner leaue
Your infant cradles, but a Throne receiue:
In ſtead of hanging at your mothers breaſt
In *Abrahams* boſome you ſecurely reſt:
Faire Infants whom the ancient Church did hold
The Flowers of Martyrs, ſprung vp in the cold
Of vnbeliefe, whoſe buds were nipt to death,
By froſt like perſecutions bitter breath,

Verſus eſt vagitus in gaudium luctus in iubilum. Cyprian.

O paruuli beati nunquam tentati, multum luctati, iam coronati. Auguſtine.

Flores martyrum. Aug.

Sanguine non lingua passione non Sermone. Chryſoſt.

O how your death due prayſe to Chriſt affords,
By blood, not tongue; in wounds, and not in words.
When greedy Wolfe the Lambe doth beare away,
The tender fleſh torne by his teeth, ſome ſay,
In taſte, if eaten, men ſhall ſweeter finde,
Then others killed whole of the ſame kind:
This obſeruation whether true or no,
Is not materiall any way to know:
Certaine it is, the fleſh of theſe brought vnder
The fangs of woluiſh *Herod*, torne aſunder,
Was ſweet vnto the Lord, and gaue delight:
For death of Saints is pretious in his ſight.
That children ſhould teach men, may ſeeme 'gainſt (ſence,
Yet we may learne frō them, faire innocence
In all our ſufferings muſt companion be:
For if we ſuffer ought deſeruedly,
With theſe we can expect no Crowne to take;

Cauſa non pœna facit Martyrem. Auguſt.

The cauſe, not croſſe, doth a true martyr make:
If that be good, though *Herods* doe conſpire
Againſt our liues, and threaten ſword or fire,
They may our bodies, not our ſoules diſtreſſe,
And their hate ſhall but worke our happineſſe,
Our croſſe ſhall crowne vs, and the death they giue,
Shall be a meanes to make vs euer liue.
Now was fulfill'd that fatall Prophecy,

Ier. 30. 15.

Which was foretold of yore by *Jeremy*;
A voice was heard in Rama, whoſe dire ſound
In woe and lamentation did abound.
Among thoſe mothers which were childleſſe made,
Rachel was one, whom griefe did ſo inuade,
That ſhunning company, ſhe ſeem'd to liue,
As ſhe were borne for nothing but to grieue.
A ſhady Groue neare her now hated-home
A neighbour ſtood, there did ſhe often rome

In

In that thicke Couert, which made day like night,
She ſought to hide her from all humane ſight:
Sometime ſhe ſets her downe cloſe by the foote
Of a faire ſpreading tree, vpon whoſe roote
With nimble hand ſhe 'gins to carue her woes,
But ere ſhe halfe haue done, her paſſion growes
To ſuch a height, ſhe marres what ſhe hath made;
Then with ſterne rage the barke ſhe doth inuade,
Stabbing, and mangling of it without ſtint,
As if her Infants wounds ſhe there could print.
Starting at this, as if feare wings did borrow,
She fled, as if ſhe would out-run her ſorrow:
At laſt a burbling Brooke ſhe doth eſpie,
Whoſe noiſe, ſhe thought, did hold fit ſympathy
With her in mourning, there ſhe ſtayes her pace,
And ſeated neare it, doth extend her face
Ouer the current: hauing fixt her looke
A while vpon the Streame, ſhe chides the Brooke
For his to ſpeedy paſſage: Stay, O ſtay
Thy courſe, relentleſſe Torrent, did ſhe ſay,
And carry my complaints with thee along,
My words, although my woes, ſhall not be long:
Say that a Mother of two hopefull twinnes
Rob'd of that hapleſſe iſſue, for her ſinnes,
Will neuer ceaſe to mourne their bloody dearth,
Till the iuſt heauens in pitty ſtop her breath;
And for this kindneſſe, I to thee will pay
My teares, as a due tribute euery day.
This ſaid, her eyes a liquid ſhewre diſtill,
As they the Fountaine were, the Streame to fill.
All that was done, which ſhe thought vndeſcried,
By a neere Kinſman of hers was eſpied,
Who now approacht, and ſitting downe beſide her,
In this milde manner did begin to chide her.

For ſhame at laſt leaue to be thus alone,
And vnto ſenceleſſe things to vent your mone;
Your faith and patience I once thought more ſtrong:
Griefes that recureleſſe are ſhould not be long:
By your immoderate ſorrow you offend
The higheſt Powers, and haſten on your end.
Beſide ſuch griefe is vaine, whether the dead,
Or elſe the liuing be conſidered:
The firſt, if they die well, are bleſt; if faile
Of a good end, our teares will nought auaile:
Your Infants death in innocency found,
This ſhould you rather comfort, then confound.
The body the ſoules priſon's ſaid to be,
Now it is death which ſets this priſoner free,
Who mournes for the enlargement of his child?
But 'tis the bodies death that makes you wild.
If it be ſo, O be no longer ſory,
That falls to riſe againe in greater glory.
Who grieues to ſee a houſe puld to the ground,
Which ſhall he knowes be better built? Some bound
Set to your ſorrow then, God will reſtore
The body farre more glorious then before.
Looke on your ſelfe, and you will find it vaine,
So great a griefe ſo long to entertaine:
For ſhould your teares in as great plenty fall,
As blood did from your Infants, could they call
Your children backe to life, no, though you mourne,
And pine to nothing, they ſhall nere returne.
Take comfort then, leſt if you ſorrow ſtill,
You ſeeme to ſpurne againſt *Iehouahs* will.

The grieued Mother, who had all this while
In much impatience heard him, with a ſmile
Borrowed from ſcorne, thus anſwered, that they liue
In health can eaſily good counſell giue

To

To ſuch as languiſh in diſeaſe and paine,
And they as hardly doe it entertaine:
Words are but words, I neuer yet could heare,
That the grieu'd heart was cured by the eare.
Aſwell may he which hath deſire to eate,
Be ſatisfied by ſeeing painted meat:
Or he that is through cold like to expire,
Warme his numbe limbes at the Apes Gloworme fire:
As I from cold and painted comfort finde
A medicine, to recure my thought ſicke minde,
Withall that I can from poore patience borrow,
I cannot pay ſo great a debt of ſorrow:
In vaine you waſte your words, my woes are more
Then time can weare away; therefore giue ore
Your fruitleſſe counſell, ſince my children are not,
Though I conſume my ſelfe in griefe, I care not;
Sorrow hath tane poſſeſſion in my breſt,
And onely can by death be diſpoſſeſt.
When ſhe had ſpoken thus, in haſty mood
She runnes, and hides her in the thickeſt Wood:
But while to trees ſhe doth her woes rehearſe,
To other matters I muſt turne my Verſe.

Saturdaies Meditation, or the seuenth *Canto.*

The Argument.

An Angell doth to Ioseph *tell*
The death of Herod: *Israel*
He longs to visit once againe:
Nazareth doth him entertaine.

NOw was the time that the Lord meant to take
Vengeance on *Herod*, therefore he did make
By iust permission, his owne issue striue
How he might him of Crowne and life depriue:
Herod, while these foule treasons were a breeding,
Got notice of *Antipaters* proceeding,
So was his base sonne call'd: the yrkesome thought
Of this vnnaturall action, quickly brought
Sicknesse of minde vpon him: and that soare
Encreasing, God did yet afflict him more,
And on his body lay a foule disease:
A secret fire he had, whose heate appease
No course of Physicke could, though much he tride,
All was in vaine, the flame did quenchlesse bide,
His bowels full of paine did rot within,
And wormes to swarme about him did begin;
The Crampe and Dropsie on his limbs did ceaze,
And there was nothing which might giue him ease.
Passing o're Iordan, neere Asphaltis Lake,
Calyrroes hot Bathes, he needes would make

Iosep. de Bello Iud. lib. 1.

A meanes vnto his cure, there he did baine, Euseb.
Yet as he went in, came out full of paine.
While *Herod* thus did in his torments broile,
Phisicians gaue aduice, that in hot oile
His body should be suppled, they prepare
A vessell for that purpose, and with care
Put him therein; the fume perturbs his head
So much, that he is taken out halfe dead.
At last come to himselfe, he knowes to sure,
That he this euill seekes in vaine to cure.
Full of despaire, somewhat before his end,
For *Salome* his sister he doth send,
(Together with her husband *Alexander*)
And to performe this foule designe command her:
Sister, you see (said the sicke man), that fate
Hath markt me out for death: the deadly hate
My subiects beare me, will not let them mourne
To see mine ashes clos'd vp in their vrne:
The meanest of them will scarce daigne let fall
A teare, to honour my sad funerall,
Rather I feare they will exceed in mirth,
To see my body turn'd into his earth:
But I haue laid a plot their ioyes to crosse,
And make thé mourne, not mine, but their own losse,
Their ioyfull exclamations Ile strike mute,
If you but faithfull be to execute:
All their young Nobles (so haue I dispos'd)
Within *Hyppodromus* are fast enclos'd,
And a strong guard about it, at my death,
Assoone as euer you shall see my breath
Forsake my body, giue a strict command,
That they may all be murder'd out of hand;
So when my corps vnto the graue shall goe,
The Iewes shall mourne whether they will or no:

So

So ſhall I haue a glorious Epitaph,
And though low vnder ground, ſhall highly laugh.
This ſaid, his ill increaſing more and more,
And his deſpaire growne greater then before,
Taking an Apple (ſuch was then his meate)
And being wont to pare, and ſo to eate,
In haſty wiſe he called for a knife,
And with that ſought to rid himſelfe of life:
But either his weake arme this foule intent
Could not performe, or others did preuent
The fatall blow: and muſt I then ſtill liue?
Cryed out the Tyrant? Will the iuſt Heauens giue
No end vnto my ſufferings? Muſt I be
The Ball of ſcorne, and Butt of miſery?
Breake breake my heart! flie forth impriſon'd breath!
And welcome, what I haue long lookt for, death.
More he had ſaid, but that he ſcarce had ſpoke
This, when with rage his very heart ſtrings broke.
While *Herod* thus in horror breath'd his laſt,
A bleſſed Angell doth to Egypt haſt,
That *Ioſeph* may haue word of this euent,
Which well he knew would giue no ſmall content
To him, ſo long an exile: in the night,
When dreames the fancy pleaſe, or elſe affright,
The Angell makes approach, and thus begins:
The Tyrant *Herod*, whoſe abhorred ſinnes
Did crie ſo long for vengeance vnto Heauen,
At laſt is iuſtly of his life bereauen:
They that delight in blood not long endure,
Though God be ſlow in ſtriking, he ſtrikes ſure;
His hands be iron, though his feet be wooll,
And Tyrants neuer leaue, vntill they pull
Dire vengeance on their heads, which long delaid,
Falls with the heauier waight. Be not afraid

Of

Of any future miſchiefe, he that ſought
The Infants, hath his owne deſtruction wrought:
Dead is the Wolfe, whoſe rage like fire did burne,
Backe to his paſture may the Lambe returne:
Therefore ariſe and take the bleſſed Childe,
Nor let thy care forget the Mother milde,
To Iſrael with them returne againe,
In Egypt thou no longer maiſt remaine.
This meſſage which the Lord did now direct
To *Joſeph*, ſhewes that he doth his reſpect:
Gods Saints in trouble muſt not alwaies liue,
In time he will a ioyfull iſſue giue
To all their ſorrowes: *Ioſeph* may be caſt
Into a lothſome priſon, but at laſt
He ſhall come forth with honour: for a ſit
Iob may in anguiſh on the dunghill ſit,
Scraping his ſoares, ere long a happier fate
Shall crowne his ioyes, and double his eſtate:
Daniel through enuie of malicious men
May cloſed be within the lyons denne,
But he their vtmoſt furie ſhall withſtand,
And after liue aduanced in the land:
Babylons king may giue command to throw
Iuſt *Sadruc*, *Meſſhac*, and *Abednego*.
Into the fornace, but he ſhall admire
To ſee them walke vnhurt, vntoucht by fire,
And afterward, their innocence to grace,
Ouer the Kingdome ſeat them in high place.
Ioſeph an exile may from *Herod* flie,
But in this perſecution muſt not die,
Now the time comes, when he by Gods command
Muſt trauaile back to his owne natiue land,
And with a happy ſalutation greet,
His Galile, whoſe ſmoke he held ſo ſweet:

Like

Like as a man for some long tedious time
Banisht from his deare Country, to a Clime
Harsh and vnpleasant, will, if he doe heare
His banishment repeal'd, with greedy eare
Receiue the happy newes, and in his mind
A not to be expressed comfort find:
So fared it with our *Ioseph*, when he knew
The tidings of the Tyrants death were true,
And that he might returne to Israel,
From which in exile he so long did dwell,
With a glad heart, and more then common care,
He all things for his iourney doth prepare,
And *Phœbus* scarce salutes the lightsome day,
When he begins his trauaile, by the way
Rendring due thankes to that Almighty power,
Which had preseru'd him to this blessed hower.
Suppose by this time they are safe arriu'd
There, where vnwearied labour had so striu'd
To bring them to the Land of Palestine,
Here *Ioseph* doth enquire about the line
Of the deceased Tyrant, and being told
That *Archelaus* did the Scepter hold
After his father: such mans weakenesse is,
Though hitherto the Lord did neuer misse
Safely to guard him, a cold trembling feare
Passing the maze of his offended eare,
Tooke hold vpon his heart: the best of Saints
While here they liue, liue not without their taints.
So *Lot*, when Sodome was consum'd with fire,
Did doubt the Mountaines safety, and desire
A place of surer refuge: so the sight
Of *Esaus* band of men did much affright
Perplexed *Iacob*, when he did repaire
Backe to his natiue home: O can despaire

Lay

Lay hold on ſuch as theſe? what then ſhall we
Doe, when in danger and extremity?
So great a power hath feare vpon our ſoules,
That it checks vertue, and euen grace controules,
And yet ſometimes (though feare ſo farre proceed,)
We ſuffer in opinion, not indeed.
But why, O *Ioſeph* wert thou thus afraid?
Didſt thou miſdoubt the Lord would ſend thee aid,
And propulſe danger from thee? Could thy mind
Conceiue a thought of feare? Since thou didſt find
Thy gracious God ſo ready ſtill to ſend
An Angell for thy guard? Did he defend
Thee and thy charge from *Herods* cruelty,
To let you fall by his ſonnes tyranny?
Was his arme ſhortned, or his loue growne leſſe,
That now he could not as much care expreſſe
In preſeruation of you, as before?
Ah no, Gods loue encreaſeth more and more
To ſuch as ſerue him, and his power extends
Beyond all limitation to his friends.
I grant thou mightſt, as not vnlikely gather,
That *Archelaus* would be like his father,
A bloody Tyrant, for a wicked Sire
Leaues his ſonne like himſelfe: a ſtrong deſire
To be thought apt for imitation,
Leades children to obſerue their parents faſhion:
But yet for all this thou maiſt reſt ſecure,
He who hath vndertaken, will procure
Safety for thee and thine, onely be bold,
And on his goodneſſe by true faith lay hold:
Danger may threaten, but it ſhall not harme
Such as are guarded by th'Almighties arme.
Now was the time, that *Morpheus* with his wand
Did charme a ſilent ſleepe on all the Land,

[illegible] mor. Ouid. Sæpius opinione quam re laboramus. Seneca.

Mali corui malum ouum. Prouerb.

Only

y perplexed *Ioseph* could not rest,
many cares lay tumbling in his breast.
he while he thought he should most safety find
going back to Egypt: but his mind
Did quickly alter, when the Lords command
Which bad expressely he should leaue the land
To his remembrance came: then he thought best
Where he now lodged to set vp his rest:
But that was dasht, when being come so neare
He did consider an vnmanly feare
Should keepe him from his home: in maze of doubt
An Angel came at last to lead him out,
Giuing direction, he should not abide
Neare *Archelaus* eye, but turne aside
Into the parts of Galile, for there
He might securely liue, without all feare
Ioseph obeyes, and now his course he bends
To Nazareth, where all his trauaile ends;
For fully seated there he liues in peace
With his soules comfort, and his ioyes encrease.

And this saith the Euangelist was done,
That there might be a consummation
Of what the Prophets told of Christ: for he
A Nazarite say they shall called be.

Expositors haue here been much perplext,
Because they can directly find this text
In none of all the Prophets; some conceaue
That time which doth of many things bereaue
The world, hath in his reuolution lost
Chrysost. Those sacred books, where these things were engro'st
Another before this his sence preferres,
Isidor. And doth for Prophets read interpreters,
For Prophets may be thought to say that thing,
Which men from them by good deduction bring.

But

But matter fetcht ſo farre wee need not vſe,
Or ſeeke the ſacred writer to excuſe:
For holy writ two waies a thing affords,
Either according to the ſence or words:
Now though we meet not the ſame words in ſound,
Yet the ſame ſence in Scripture may be found.
Nazaren ſignifies one flouriſhing,
And doth not *Eſay* call this heauenly King
A Rod of *Ieſſes* ſtem, a branch that growes
Out of his roote, each one that Scripture knowes, Iſai. 11. 1.
Knowes this prophetique truth: Againe this name
Is giuen him, that he may haue the ſame
Which his type had before him: Sampſons facts
Did but foreſignifie our Sauiours acts:
Sampſon from barraine parents did proceed:
And Chriſt alone was the pure Virgins ſeed:
His killing of the lyon did foretell
Chriſt ſhould that roaring lyons power quell:
Slaughtering his foes euen when he loſt his breath
ſhewed Chriſt ſhould ouercome his foes by death:
Now of the firſt we read that he was ſtil'd
A Nazarite to God: therefore this child Iudg. 13. 15.
That truth and type might fitly both agree,
was call'd a Nazaren aswell as he.
But properly his name came from the place
Hight Nazareth, which had the happy grace
To giue him education as a bower
Moſt fit to entertaine ſo ſweet a flower.
Nazareth doth a flower ſignifie,
And what place could he better dignifie
With his abode, then that whoſe name expreſt
His nature, who of all flowers was the beſt:
Alcinous garden, or *Adonis* Bower,
Was neuer deckt with halfe ſo rare a flower,

Thoſe

oſe of the greateſt beauty are but ſilly
Sharons Roſe, or to the Valleys Lilly.
his is not like French Flowers, in out-ſide braue,
Which yet within nor ſent, nor vertue haue,
No, from an outſide meane there doth diſtill
Such vertue, as the Saints with grace doth fill.
The Soule a Noſegay is, if this adorne it,
The Lord will take the ſent, if not, hee' lſcorne it.
O may this bleſſed flower which now doth grow
In Heauens high Nazareth, not here below,
Make vs ſo ſweetly in Gods noſtrils ſmell,
That we tranſplanted from the earth may dwell
In Heauen for euer, and in ſuch a ioy,
As time cannot weare out, or death deſtroy,
Flouriſh with Chriſt, and bliſfull Peans ſing,
Vnto the praiſe of our eternall King.

FINIS.

Errata.

Pag. 3. l. 2. r. *an.* l 25. r. *armies.* p. 10. l. 10. r. *Iew.* l 27. r. *ſucceſſors.* p. 13. l. 2. r. *y' runne.* p. 16 l. 25. r. *1by.* p. 17 l 17. r. *when* p. 18. l. 6 r. *humane.* p. 19. l. 20. r. *leeſe.* p. 31. l 18. r. *none.* p. 34. l. 10. r. *repurchace.* p. 43 l. 16. r. *Ewe.* p. 45 l. 14 r. *yeld.* p. 49. l. 19 r. *kill.* p. 57. l. 22. r *in.*

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